



Digital Workbook  
Edition



Children and Young People's Services

# Strengthening Managers Programme

## Strengthening **Staff**



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# Introduction

## Part two: Strengthening staff

You should already have attended the first workshop and received the workbook on Strengthening Self as part of the Strengthening Managers Programme. This will have been followed by support to help you transfer your learning into practice.

You are now embarking on the second part of the programme, which is about strengthening your staff. This workbook will take you through Part Two. We will start with a review of the aims and values of the programme.

## Strengthening managers programme

This course supports front-line managers in social care to improve the experience and outcomes of children, adults and families. First-line managers are in a position not only to strengthen their own work, but also to strengthen the practice of their staff and to strengthen the organisational culture. Therefore the programme is in three parts:

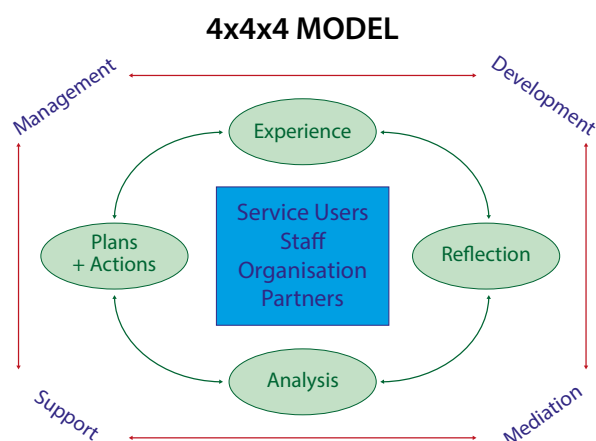
- Strengthening self;
- Strengthening staff;
- Strengthening the organisation.

## Programme objectives

The learning goals of the programme are to:

- Strengthen managers' practice;
  - Develop professional judgement through increased self-awareness and reflective work;
  - Deliver management tasks with confidence under pressure;
  - Identify and meet their own learning needs;
  - Ask for support appropriately and use support constructively;
  - Take ownership of their role within the organisation.

- Support managers to strengthen the practice of their staff;
  - Act as role models for critically reflective practice;
  - Challenge appropriately to improve performance;
  - Promote individual and team learning to improve practice;
  - Provide appropriate support to manage uncertainty, risk and emotional impact;
  - Balance individual, team and organisational demands.
- Enable managers to contribute to the development of social care in their organisation;
  - Contribute to a professional culture;
  - Support service improvement;
  - Contribute to a learning culture;
  - Contribute to a positive working culture;
  - Act as ambassadors for the organisation.



These goals are based on the four functions of management within the 4x4x4 model of supervision:

- Management (including reflective practice);
- Development;
- Support;
- Mediation.<sup>1</sup>

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**Programme values**

The values underpinning this course are the same as those that underpin good social care. We will seek to ensure that we all:

- Feel valued and empowered to make a contribution as experts in our own right;
- Keep the focus of all our work on the customers that we are here for;
- Acknowledge and respect differences;
- Challenge and support constructively;
- Share, in the confidence that we will not report what has been offered up in the session, unless action is needed due to risk of harm.

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**Learning needs analysis and practice improvement**

You should by now have done a learning needs analysis for the second section of the programme: strengthening staff.

This enables you to look at the learning areas for the programme and reflect on how capable and confident your practice is in each area.

You will develop a practice improvement plan to strengthen your practice in a particular area.

It is important that you complete this activity in order to make the most of the learning from the programme and to use it to improve your practice after the workshops.

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Morrison (2001) Staff supervision in social care Pavillion Publishing UK.

# Strengthening Staff



## Agenda day one

### 9.30 – 10.15 Introduction

- Feedback from coaching
- Reminder of the programme

### 10.15 – 11.00 Session one: Purpose

- The vision and goals of social care in this area
- The meaning of this for children and adults and families
- What this course will offer in terms of learning and training transfer
- Review of learning needs analysis

### 11.00 – 11.30 Break

### 11.30 – 12.15 Session two: Reflection

- Modelling and leading the functional team environment
- Developing reflection in staff – supervision, peer reflection, mentoring
- Empowering children and adults and families through reflective practice

### 12.30 – 13.15 Lunch

### 13.15 – 14.00 Group exercise: Critically reflective case discussion

### 14.00 – 14.15 Break

### 14.15 – 15.00 Session three: Management

- Positive expectations approach
- Managing performance
- Giving critical feedback

### 15.00 – 15.45 Group exercise: Bridging interview

### 15.45 – 16.00 Close

# Strengthening Staff



## Agenda day two

**9.30 – 9.45 Welcome back and learning logs**

**9.45 – 10.15 Development**

- Promoting professional capabilities
- Using evidence to improve practice
- Sharing learning

**10.15 – 11.00 Group exercise: Appraising research**

**11.00 – 11.30 Break**

**11.30 – 12.15 Session five: Support**

- Developing emotional intelligence
- Containment to manage emotion
- Managing conflict within the team

**12.15 – 13.00 Group exercise: Responding to emotional disruption in the team**

**13.00 – 13.45 Lunch**

**13.45 – 14.30 Session six: Mediation**

- Using upward and downward power
- Managing values issues
- Managing change

**14.30 – 15.00 Group exercise: Managing change**

**15.00 – 15.15 Break**

**15.15 – 15.45 Session seven: Action planning**

**15.45 – 16.00 Close**

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## Exercise 1: Learning needs analysis: staff

Look at the learning areas below and reflect on how capable and confident your practice is in each area. Give yourself a score from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) – make notes in the comments section to summarise why you have given yourself that score.

Learning Area	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5 Very High	Comments on Learning needs
I am prepared to ask questions and say when I don't know what to do						
I use supervision, peer forums and mentoring to support reflection in my team						
I enable staff to reflect on how they impact on children, adults and families						
I am clear about what I expect from staff						
I provide regular feedback on how staff are doing						
I have constructive discussions about performance concerns						

Exercises

Tools

Contents

Learning Area	1 Very Low	2	3	4	5 Very High	Comments on learning needs
I support my staff to develop the capabilities they need						
I create opportunities for my staff to learn from research, practice and user views						
I create opportunities for my staff to share learning with others						
I encourage emotional awareness and empathy in the team						
I respond effectively to strong emotions and support staff to process these						
I enable my staff to manage and overcome internal conflict						
I am clear with my staff about the power I have and how I use it						
I mediate between the organisation and my staff when there are differences in aims and values						
I support my staff to be involved in change and to manage the impact of this						



## Exercise 2: Critically reflective case discussion

**Using the Systemic Reflective Space (SRS) model described below in groups of 6 to take a case through the process. Use all the materials available to complete this piece of work.**

### The model

Systemic Reflective Space (SRS) focuses on developing professional practice that requires practitioners to use their skills, competence and abilities in a shared communal/collective way, thus inviting collaborative and reflective practice.

SRS provides an alternative view (or views) on aspects of the practitioner's work and offers an opportunity for the practitioner to explore a variety of options in their practice, facilitate learning and help transform practice. Reflective practice space focuses on strength and diversity of repertoires.

### Ground rules : Expectations of reflecting team members

The ground rules refer to the position reflecting team members are encouraged to take to facilitate the process. The principles are taken from Tom Anderson's (1987) work on the reflecting team.

- Reflect presenter's pace/style;
- Connect comments to material that has been presented;
- Be mindful of negative feedback;
- Talk in a way that enables the presenter to listen;
- Listen in a way that enables the presenter to speak/give feedback;
- Ideas should be presented tentatively. They should not be presented as SOLUTIONS;
- The reflecting team conversation should not mirror what the presenter has discussed but offer something quite different to enable sufficient difference to emerge from the process. Too many same/similar ideas is not helpful;

- Reflecting team model invites participants to offer as many explanations for a situation as is possible;
- The reflecting team process is about creating passion for possibilities that will lead to HOPE and CHANGE.

### Getting started:

In groups of 6 nominate one person to present a practice issue. Following the guideline below:

1. One participant presents a practice issue. The issue is presented in story form from the point of view of the practitioner, then from the point of view of the service user and then from the point of view of any other key players. The story should only take about 15 minutes to tell. The practitioner can use any of the available resources to tell the story.

Others pay attention to how the presenter talks about the issue, with a focus on 'emotional listening'.

Emotional listening requires a willingness to let the other parties dominate the discussion. It requires attentiveness to what is being said. Emotional listeners take care not to interrupt. When they do ask questions they use open-ended questions. Emotional listeners reflect sensitivity to the emotions being expressed, and have the ability to reflect back to the other party the substance and feelings being expressed.

2. Presenter silently observes the group discussing the issue. The group will talk with each other whilst the presenter sits outside the circle. No questions are to be asked or answered at this stage.

All participants must learn to 'sit with uncertainty'.

Sitting with uncertainty involves a willingness to continually challenge one's own assumptions and place knowledge in the

context of values, past experiences, feelings and relationships to test them out.

3. No problem solving - the aim of the exercise is to explore different ways of understanding the presenting dilemma. The group converses and explores using stories, pictures, sculpt or object. Within the group all modes should be explored.
4. What caught their attention? Capture the 'known' and 'unknown' areas of the original presentation. The group is to explore why their own attention has landed on the story in the way it has.

5. What further information would they want? The group generate a list of 'curious' questions to explore with the presenter. They do not ask the questions and the presenter does not answer them. The presenter remains outside the circle –listening.
6. Presenter comments on the group's discussion – talking about what captured their attention and why. Remember the rules of the group interaction.
7. Reflection on why different perspectives have emerged.



## Exercise 3: Bridging interview

**This exercise helps you to prepare a critical feedback statement and to rehearse giving the statement. This exercise is not a role play.**

In a small groups of three:

- Each person on their own, without discussion thinks of a real, preferably current situation in which you as a manager need to give critical feedback to a member of staff about their performance or practice, e.g. poor record keeping, lateness, judgmental attitude etc;
- Imagine you have planned to address this issue at the opening of the next supervision session. Now write down an opening statement in which you explain your concerns by giving specific feedback. Take a maximum of 10 minutes to do this;
- Having prepared the statements, each person in the group takes turns to very briefly explain the context in which the statement is being given, and then reads their statement out. Please read this slowly and repeat it if necessary;

- The other members of the group listen to the statement and then comment on:
  - What was good about it in terms of its specificity, ownership, clarity, and message to the member of staff;
  - Whether any bits were unclear, or ambiguous;
  - Any ways in which the statement might be improved.

Each statement and the commentary on it should take no more than about 10 minutes to read and discuss.

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## Exercise 4: Appraising research

### A research and practice forum combines discussion of research with application of the research to practice.

Prior to the forum, participants are sent a piece of research to read - this may be the executive summary of a recent report.

The facilitator opens the forum by reminding people of the importance of using research in practice.

1. The facilitator then leads a discussion about how useful the research is:
  - How reliable it is – where did it come from?
  - How robust it is – can we see the workings out?
  - How relevant it is – does it apply to the situations that we encounter?
2. The facilitator supports participants to identify what the implications of the research might be for their practice.

The research is then applied to practice through case discussions.

3. In groups of 3-6 people, one person volunteers a case where they think that the research is relevant to the situation.

The Kolb reflective cycle is used to talk through the case. At each stage, participants ask the volunteer to talk about the case and then discuss how that relates to the research that they have read.

**Experience** – what happened: before; during; and after the event or situation?

- How does that fit with what the research suggests might happen in these kind of situations?

**Emotion** – how did you feel and how did others feel at the time; how do you feel now?

- How does that fit with the way the research suggests people might feel in these kind of situations?
- **Analysis** – what did this event or situation mean to you and to others; what did it remind you of and what was unusual about it?
- How does that fit what the research suggests causes these kind of situations?

**Action** – what do you need to do in order to understand your role and others' roles in the event or situation; how can you make progress; how can you use what you have learnt with others?

- How does that fit what the research suggests might be helpful in these kind of situations?

4. The facilitator finishes by asking people

### A short exercise that is useful to do is to:

Read a short piece of research.

As a group discuss the following questions:

- How reliable is the research
- How robust is the research
- How transferable is the research?
- How would I summarise it?

what learning they will take away and use in practice.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> RiPFA (2013) How to run a journal club: Practice tool



## Exercise 5: Responding to emotional disruption in the team

(use vignettes of staff who have experienced fear, guilt or shame and consider how this can be managed within the team)

### Guilt

A phone call comes into the team room. The person who answers is an experienced social worker who has been working for several years with a woman with mental health problems.

The woman tells her that she is at the end of her tether, she has nothing to live for and she doesn't want to go on with her life.

It is ten minutes to five on a Friday and the social worker wants to go home. However, she feels that she cannot leave the woman even though she doesn't know what she can do to help.

The woman tells the social worker that it is alright for her as she can just ignore her and go off to her family, whereas she has nowhere to go and nobody cares about her.

The social worker starts to cry and doesn't know what to say.

### Fear

"You can handle this" (extracted from article by Liza Manolis for Journal of Comparative Social Work 2013/1)

I jolted up in my bed and looked at my alarm clock, saw it was 2:30 am and wondered why my alarm going off at such an ungodly hour? I then realized that it was not my alarm, but instead that the telephone was ringing. My stomach dropped.

"Hi Liza, sorry to wake you, it's 'Marilyn' (a supervisor at work). There has been a serious allegation of child abuse, and as an experienced 'senior' social worker I am asking you to attend to it. I know you are not working right now, but the social worker who is working is new and lacks experience in this regard, and I know you can handle this."

### Shame

The drive from KC's house to the hospital was less than two minutes, and the car ride was silent. I was not in a position to "debrief" Sarah, as I was still in shock and disbelief myself. At the hospital the doctor saw us immediately, x-rays were completed and a full skeletal exam was performed. Johnny had a broken rib, a broken wrist, six burn marks, four lacerations and over 62 bruises all over his eight month-old body.

Sarah and I then proceeded back to my vehicle. Once we both shut our door, I immediately burst into tears, and was crying uncontrollably and apologizing for crying at the same time. I had never seen a child look like that, and I could not get over the fact that he had been suffering in pain for so long. I just kept crying and crying, and apologizing and apologizing. I knew I was crying because of what had been happening to the baby, but also because I had removed a child from essentially another child, who had never really been given a fair chance at raising a child. I was crying because I felt helpless and guilty for revictimizing the mother, but also because I knew that there was no other option. Of the most significance was the fact that I was embarrassed to be crying, especially in front of a new social worker who I was training. I knew that I had let Marilyn down, as when I told her that I did not get to debrief Sarah because I was so upset, she stated, "I didn't know you were such a bleeding heart, and I thought you could have handled it."

**Pick one of the vignettes and reflect on the following questions:**

- Why is the social worker experiencing this emotion?
- How is this impacting on them and others (the client, the team, you)?
- What can you do to respond and to support the client, the worker and the team?



Emotion	
How is this emotion apparent?	
What are the causes of this emotion	
What action can we take to help us manage the change better?	





## Exercise 7: Practice improvement plan

Revisit your learning needs analysis – what were your learning needs?

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Look at your learning logs - what have you learned or remembered that you want to use in your practice?

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Discuss the learning from this workshop with people around you

Identify a practice area that you want to improve in and why

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### In the table below, identify:

The actions you will take to achieve your goal

The possible barriers that will prevent you from achieving your goal

The support you will, therefore, need to achieve your goal

When you will have done this

The target that you want to reach, which will show you that you have achieved your goal – this target should be SMARTER:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Realistic**
- **Time-bound**
- **Ethical**
- **Reviewed**

My practice goal is:

SMARTER Target			
When will I have this done			
Support			
Barriers			
Action			

Action	Barriers	Support	When will I have this done	SMARTER Target

You will receive support to help you to carry out these actions: An individual coaching call to discuss barriers and enablers to training transfer; A group coaching session to discuss your actions and the difference they have made to your practice, and to develop ongoing implementation plans.

# Purpose

“The conventional definition of management is getting work done through people, but real management is developing people through work.” – Agha Hasan Abedi

*The overall goal of this part of the programme is to support managers to strengthen the practice of their staff.*

*(Jo Fox and Gerry Nosowska)*

**Goal: Ensure participants are ready to learn in order to improve their practice**

## The aims of social care teams

Teams in social care exist to deliver organisational goals that come from national law and policy, and local priorities. Teams tend to work with particular people in a particular geographical area so they will have specific considerations arising from this. Within the team there will be managers with different skills, knowledge, experience and attributes, who will work individually and collectively to achieve the aims. The team leader/manager has three roles:

- Doer – creating the conditions for practitioners to do good practice;
- Model – demonstrating ways of working that reflect learning about good practice;
- Leader – inspiring and motivating good practice.

Your team plan should set out the aims of your team within your service and your organisation. You should be able to see a clear link between what you do in the team and what your service and organisation aims to achieve.

Ideally your team will have a vision (a short statement of what it is there to achieve) that you can share with people who need social care.



### Reflective question

What is my team here to do?

The manager should also be able to see how the people in the team can achieve the aims. You will have a relationship with each of them and, from this, an understanding of their capabilities. You can use the Professional Capabilities Framework to consider with them what level they are working at (e.g. social worker or experienced social or advanced level worker), and which capabilities they have strengths in. You can then consider how they can best contribute to fulfilling the aims of the team. This reflection will form the basis of their appraisal and learning plan.



### Reflective question

How can the people in my team, including me, achieve our aims?

You will use the four functions of your role to support your team:

- Management (including reflective practice);
- Development;
- Support;
- Mediation.

## The meaning for children, adults and families

The ultimate aim of strengthening the team's practice is to improve the lives of children, adults and families.

There should be a direct line from the team's practice; to the impact on the experience and outcomes of children, families and adults.

You can use feedback from children, families and adults to understand the impact that your team has on them. This feedback may come from:

- Discussion in supervision, peer forums and team meetings;
- Compliments, comments and complaints;
- Consultations and evaluations by your organisation;
- Anecdotal feedback.

As with any information you will need to consider:

- Where did it come from?
- Can I see a link between what happened and the conclusions drawn from this?
- Can I identify any implications for practice?

It is important to learn from a range of experiences that people have, not just from the negative ones.

## Strengthening staff practice

The aims of this two-day workshop are to strengthen the way in which you act as a model and leader for your team.

This workshop will help you to:

- Act as role models for critically reflective practice;
- Challenge appropriately to improve performance;
- Promote individual and team learning to improve practice;
- Provide appropriate support to manage

uncertainty, risk and emotional impact;

- Balance individual, team and organisational demands.

Through the Learning needs analysis, you should already have identified areas of your practice that you want to strengthen.

Throughout the workshop, you will need to reflect on how you can use the learning to achieve your personal improvement goals.

This course is not just about doing a better job. It is about being a real difference in the lives of people who need it.



### Reflective question

What difference will it make for children, adults and families if my team's practice improves?



[Exercise 1: Learning needs analysis: staff](#)



[Exercise 2: Group exercise: Critically reflective case discussion](#)

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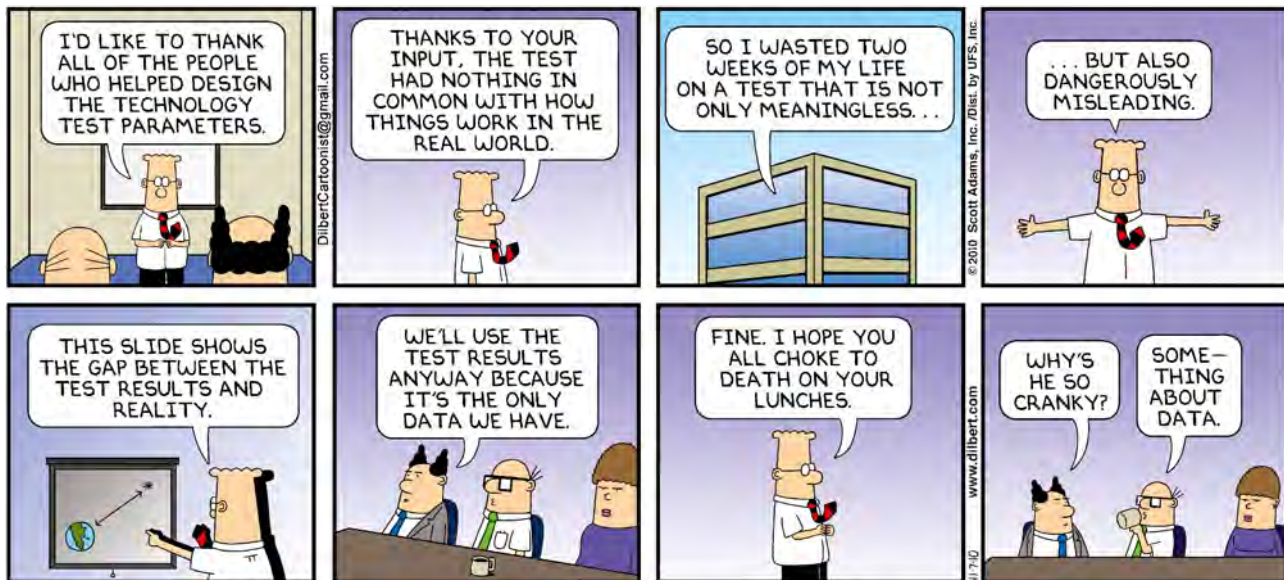
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# Reflection

“Maybe reflective practices offer us a way of trying to make sense of the uncertainty in our workplaces and the courage to work competently and ethically at the edge of order and chaos...” – (Ghaye, 2000, p.7)

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**Goal: Act as role models for critically reflective practice**

## Modelling and leading reflection

This section we shall consider what promotes reflective behaviour in staff.

Reflective practice is understood as the process of learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and/or practice (Boud et al 1985; Boyd and Fales, 1983; Mezirow, 1981, Jarvis, 1992).

The individual practitioners will need:

- To examine assumptions of everyday practice;
- To be self-aware and critical in evaluating their own responses to practice situations;
- To recapture practice experiences and mull them over critically in order to gain new understandings and so improve future practice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Reflecting on 'Reflective practice' PBPL paper 52 Linda Finlay A discussion paper prepared for PBPL CETL ([www.open.ac.uk/pbpl](http://www.open.ac.uk/pbpl)). January 2008

This is understood as part of the process of life-long learning. The manager is looking for opportunities to create learning experiences.

*“We have to see ourselves less as transmitters of expert knowledge and more as facilitators of critical learning and perspective transformation. As Boud et al. (1993, p.9) state, ‘while we commonly assume that teaching leads to learning, it is the experiences which teaching helps create that prompt learning, not primarily the acts of the teacher.’” (Redmond, 2006, p.226)*

*“Critical thinking is a capacity to work with complex ideas to enable a person to make effective provision of evidence to justify a reasonable judgement. The evidence, and therefore the judgement, will pay appropriate attention to the context of the judgement.”*

The fully developed capacity to think critically relies on an understanding of knowledge as constructed and related to its context (relativistic).

If knowledge is viewed only in an absolute manner (ie knowledge as a series of facts) it limits the critical evaluation and leads to narrow judgements.

The meaning of a 'judgement' may relate to a judgement of one thing against another/others (like a decision) or the judgement of the merit of one thing (sometimes in relation to a purpose or set of criteria). The idea of effective judgement implies effectiveness in the thinking and in the quality of the representation of the thinking in writing, speech, etc. Correspondingly, both the thinking and its representation need to display clarity and precision.

The critical thinker will be able to take a critical stance towards her actual process of critical thinking (metacognition).

Practitioners are required to use reflection in three ways:

1. **Self-reflection** = I want to know why I do what I do;
2. **Empathetic reflection** = I am able to understand people from different cultures and religious backgrounds;
3. **Reflective communication** = I am open to discussion and challenge about my opinions.<sup>4</sup>

Munro in 2008 wrote "Child protection work makes heavy demands on reasoning skills. With an issue as important as children's welfare, it is vital to have the best standard of thinking humanly possible. Mistakes are costly to the child and the family."

This applies equally to working in Adult Services, Mental Health, or any other areas where professionals are required to make judgements on issues of how people live their life, what access they gain to societies resources and in some instances on their liberty, their rights and their responsibilities.

The following factors have been highlighted as either hindering or helping reflective practice:

- **Practical and emotional demands** = it is hard work to remain constantly questioning and curious. You can unsettle yourself and others by asking hard questions;

- **Support and Supervision** = without safe and reliable spaces in which to think about and process feelings there is a risk of simply switching off;
- **System issues** = over reliance on any individual not to make mistakes in complex situations is not the answer. Human error needs to be seen as a starting point for system correction and support rather than as a place to blame post event;
- **Organisational and procedural constraints** = unsafe learning environments can impact upon the way individuals and organisational learn and evolve. Environments that are able to encourage innovative and creative responses to challenges are more able to promote critical thinking.

Skills and attributes that are characteristic of critical, analytical and reflective thinking include:

- Curiosity;
- Open-mindedness;
- The ability to manage uncertainty and not knowing;
- Being able to question one's own assumptions as well as those of others;
- The ability to hypothesise;
- Self awareness;
- Observation skills;
- Problem solving skills;
- The ability to synthesise and evaluate information from a range of sources;
- Creativity;
- Sense making;
- The ability to present one's thoughts clearly, both verbally and in writing.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Taken from Guide to developing social worker's emotional resilience, Grant & Kinman, 2012

<sup>5</sup> Turney, (revised 2014) pg 9, Literature Review Analysis and Critical Thinking in Assessment 2nd Ed, Research in Practice, UK

The manager is required to promote reflective practice in their staff through attending to the environment, the person and the skills.

### The functional team environment



*“Critical thinking is a capacity to work with complex ideas whereby a person can make effective provision of evidence to justify a reasonable judgement.*

*The evidence, and therefore the judgement, will pay appropriate attention to context.” (Dr Moon)*

As a manager, you need to understand what type of environment your staff will thrive in. How can you create the ideal circumstances for them to be able to deliver compassionate, creative and helpful services to children, young people, adults and families?

A functional team environment comprises the individual's personal workspace, their response to this workplace, and the role they hold within it, and the behaviours they exhibit as part of it.

As manager you need to develop a sensitivity to these staff responses and find ways to enable and encourage critically reflective practice daily.

Learning starts with an EXPERIENCE. This causes anxiety and the response to that can be functional or dysfunctional depending on the organisational culture. In a functional organisation, anxiety is acknowledged and this allows reflection. In a dysfunctional organisation, anxiety cannot be acknowledge and this provokes a flight or fight response.

**Functional:**

**I had a very difficult experience and need to learn from it.**

**Dysfunctional:**

**I need to avoid being in that situation again.**

After the experience comes the REFLECTION on the impact/outcome of the experience, both for yourself and others. When reflection is possible, it feels safe to work out how the experience could have been better responded to or contained. In a dysfunctional organisation with no reflection, people either avoid talking about the impact of the experience or they become defensive. It is important that in this part of the cycle people are able to talk about how the experience made them feel.

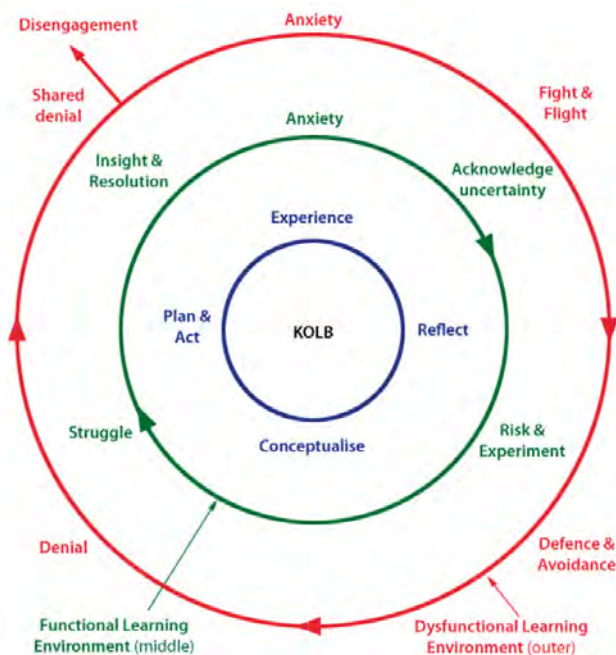
**Functional:**

**How did what I feel influence me? Influence others? Influence the outcome?**

**Dysfunctional:**

**I was just doing my job. The parent is hostile. They will never change.**

Experimentation allows people to CONCEPTUALISE different responses in order to plan how best to act with a similar experience in the future. In a dysfunctional organisation with no room for conceptualisation, people deny the need to act in alternative ways. This stage helps us talk about what everyone gained from the encounter and whether there is other benefits we could add or bring next time. It also helps us to generalize what we have learnt so it is more accessible in our memory (practice wisdom) for our next encounters.





**Functional:**

**I need to work through alternative ways of acting.**

**Dysfunctional:**

**Everything's fine.**

Once alternatives have been conceptualised, people can then PLAN and ACT, reaching resolution. It also enables them to develop a resilience about not knowing, as going around the cycle rewards people behaving in a curious and reflective manner. In a dysfunctional organisation things do not become resolved, instead those who have experienced difficulties seek others to join with them in denying that things could ever have been different.

**Functional:**

**This is what I've learned.**

**Dysfunctional:**

**We all know that it's always going to be like this.**

**Reflective question**

How safe do you feel to remain curious and sit with uncertainty when managing risk?

### Reflection amidst haste – barriers and enablers of reflection

*“Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence” Desiderata by Max Ehrmann, 1952*

Congdon, Flynn and Redman, in their article ‘Balancing the “We” and “Me” explore the challenges presented by open plan offices. They paraphrase the challenge as “open offices are supposed promote collaboration, but people just don't like them much. Companies have been trying for decades to find the balance between public and private workspace that best supports collaboration.”

Open plan may have started out in the 1980's as an attempt by private companies to ensure that people were less isolated and collaborated more

easily but in the current financial environment of the 20 something's it can seem more like an attempt to minimise outlay and maximise use of space.

In social care we could identify the challenge as open plan offices are supposed to be more efficient and effective use of resources in financially challenged authorities but people do not like them much. Managers are left trying to find a way to support workers to be reflective and thoughtful in environments that feel pressured and high stimulus.

This dilemma is reflected in the research showing that “people feel a pressing need for more privacy, not only to do the heads-down work but to cope with the intensity of how work happens today.”<sup>6</sup>

Some of the developments that are driving this need for privacy include:

- Open plan working;
- Mobile devices making sure we are always accessible;
- Emphasis on collaborative work means we are rarely alone.

In social care we can also add the additional drivers:

- The majority of our work takes place with other people in relational interactions that are often emotionally laden. Having a safe and contained space that promotes reflection between these encounters is critical;
- Understanding the complex interactions and behaviours in families requires reflection and critical thinking – tasks that require ‘controlled attention’. (see below for definition of different types of attention).

In social care today, workers often do not have an allocated desk, but take what is available each day, having placed their possessions in their locker or secure pod overnight. Teams are not always able to sit together, and sometimes supervisors can be difficult to locate in open plan spaces.

<sup>h</sup> The Open Office, (Oct 2014) pg 52, Steel Case in HRB.org Harvard Business Review

Ferguson argues that “‘agile working’, where workers are permitted to do some home working, such as report writing and case recording...may bring some benefits to staff...such arrangements are in danger of promoting practice that is detached and literally distant from service users and lacking in intimacy.”<sup>7</sup>

Staff members will often use their car as a safe place to have privacy. This should raise concerns about the isolation and the accountability of staff and where and when they are able to gain support.

Managers need to be able to identify bases where people are able to connect and be contained and have control over the analytical/administrative side of their workload. Some strategies for managing open plan working have been identified. The key concept involves re-defining privacy in the workplace and challenging the idea that it is based in physical terms. Privacy can be seen as the individuals ability to:

- a) Control information (what others need to know both personal and private) and:
- b) Control stimulation (any sort of disruption).
  - i) The need to control information is compromised by the easy access everyone has to each other in the open plan environment. People can easily see what each other is doing; hear what each other is saying; access another person in the middle of a task; share files or information on my workload; see and hear me feeling distressed, out of control or uncertain. This can lead to individuals feeling uncomfortably vulnerable.
  - ii) The need to control stimuli encompasses the noises and other distractions that break concentration or inhibit the ability to focus. Whilst one person's distraction might be another's comforting white noise, we all need ways to manage distractions.

There are three basic modes of attention:

**1. Controlled attention:** working on a task that requires intense focus, such as writing or thinking deeply, while wilfully avoiding unrelated thoughts and inhibiting external stimuli. Whilst we are in this mode,

interruptions and other distractions are unwelcome, and our need to control the environment around us increases.

**2. Stimulus driven attention:** switching focus when something catches our attention. When we are performing routine tasks – responding to emails, scheduling meetings, or catching up on other administrative work – we may tolerate or even welcome interruptions or distractions. Many people chose to perform routine tasks in open, social or active settings.

**3. Rejuvenation:** the periodic respites form concentration that we take throughout the day. It is a time out for our brains and bodies and often a chance to engage socially with others or express emotions that we've kept on a tight leash. For rejuvenation, people may seek either a highly stimulating environment or a quiet one, depending on personal preference.<sup>8</sup>

Managers need to support their staff to identify which tasks require which type of attention and then think more about the strategies they can use to manipulate the environment to manage this. This is critical to the first task of controlled attention that is required to successfully carry out assessment planning and review tasks. This links directly to how stimuli is experienced in the environment.

Bion's theory of containment can be linked to the practitioner. “Practitioners need containment of their own feelings and those projected upon them by service users and other professional colleagues if they are to think clearly and keep their focus on the service user. Central to this containment is safe places to talk openly, think, be still, to process their feelings, and to enable them to know their experiences and make sense of what is reverberating within them.”<sup>9</sup> This links directly to the need to control information in the environment and promote a sense of privacy. Managers need to be able to find ways to monitor staff containment and to provide places and spaces for them to respond to the distress and stress of the emotional cotangent in the work.

<sup>7</sup> Ferguson, H (2011), Child Protection Practice, Palgrave Macmillan UK

<sup>8</sup> Congdon, Flynn and Redman, (2014) op cit, pg 54

<sup>9</sup> Ferguson, (2011) op cit, pg 198



### Reflective question

Think about your staff and the workplace:

#### Are your staff able to:

Concentrate easily?

Work in teams without being interrupted?

Choose where to work in the office according to the task at hand?

What kind of protocols could you put in place to support your workforce?

What kind of signals can your practitioners give that help them establish private boundaries with their co-workers?

How can you use the space strategically to make it easier for staff to shift between different modes of work?

## Developing reflection in staff

*"It is very difficult to make really big, important, life-changing decisions because we are all susceptible to a formidable array of decision biases. There are more of them than we realize, and they come to visit us more often than we like to admit."*<sup>10</sup>

Supervision is often cited as key in developing reflective capacity in staff. Supervising managers are seen as having responsibility for promoting reflection in practitioners. This opportunity to reflect can occur in a number of different ways including:

- **Individual** – with a person who has management oversight of the practitioner, a specialist from the same or another discipline discussing cases or themes;
- **Group** – with the team manager, or with a specialist, or peer lead, discussing cases or themes;
- **Peer** - in groups or individual, discussing cases or themes.

There are a number of different models in use to promote reflective discussion including Kolb's cycle. This model is widely used in social care.

Brookfield's model below can work alongside Kolb's to assist the practitioner to unpick assumptions that underpin all human reasoning.

Brookfield (2209) identifies four stages of reflective practice:

1. Find a disorientating dilemma where something does not fit;
2. Identify where the assumptions are;
3. Assess the accuracy of those assumptions;
4. Look at actions and interruptions of events through the eyes of others, as a further check on deciding whether the assumptions are worth retaining as guides to action.

Key behaviours to promoting reflection include:

- Maintaining curiosity;
- Generating hypothesis by asking 'what else could this be?';
- Maintaining a stance of uncertainty (least likely to be wrong rather than right);
- Keeping a focus on the 'lived life' of the service user;
- Demonstrating your workings out through recording that captures decision making points;
- Paying attention to emotion as a source of information;
- Expecting mistakes in your reasoning and decision making and keeping a look out for them.

### Opportunities for reflection

- Supervision;
- Peer reflection;
- Mentoring;
- Reflection with other agencies.

Managers support their staff by overseeing their decision making through reflective conversations. The conversations can take place in any setting but should be used deliberately to evoke a sense of curiosity in the practitioner.

<sup>10</sup> Dan Ariely, (2008) The Upside of Irrationality: The Unexpected Benefits of Defying Logic at Work and at Home

Empowering children, adults and families through reflection

*“When I started to work with the social worker I just cried. The social worker told me that is exactly what she wanted me to do. To get it out no matter, whatever it was. And I got to trust her then and that’s how I started to work out of it. I’d do the talking and they’d do the listening. It’s good to talk.” (A 28 year old mother of two in a neglect case from Ferguson H, Child Protection Practice, 2011)*

**Reflection in action and on action**

For our work to be effective in the long term with children, adults and families, practitioners need to be able to understand and reflect on their own journey and the issues they face. They also need to be able to imagine what it is like to live the day to day life of someone else – to be reflexive or other minded. By linking their own awareness of their issues with the experiences of others they may be able to make better choices in the moment – reflection in action.

Practitioners need to have strategies to be able to promote this level of awareness in the people they work with. This is often achieved through using emotional listening skills. Practitioners seek to listen and understand the feelings behind the words and actions and reflect them back to the service user.

**Reflective question**  
 Why is reflective practice important for children, adults and families?

**Making a business case**

If you are thinking about whether to introduce a new way of working such as more reflective practice, then you need to consider two areas:

- Whether it makes more difference or less than the current way of working or another option (effectiveness difference)

- And whether it costs more or less than the current way of working or another option (cost difference).




You can think about cost and effectiveness on a chart like this.

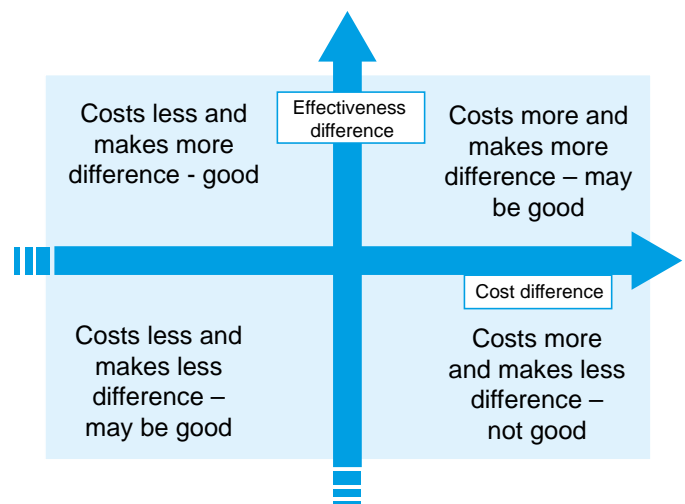
You can plot different options on the chart

If something costs less and makes more difference – then you are likely to want to do this (this is the top left)

If something costs more and makes less difference – then you are likely to not want to do this (this is the bottom right)

If something costs more and makes more difference/ costs less and makes less difference – then whether you do it or not is a question of judgement (top right and bottom left)

-  [Exercise 2: Critically reflective case discussion](#)
-  [Tool 1: Johns’ model of structured reflection](#)
-  [Tool 2: Borton’s \(1970\) framework further developed by Rolfe \(2001\)](#)



# Management

The most troubling and intractable situations exist when performance difficulties occur in the context of staff who lack accurate empathy, self awareness and self management skills. The lack of emotional competence renders the specific performance problems such as poor recording practice, all but unmanageable. – (Morrison 2007 page 247)

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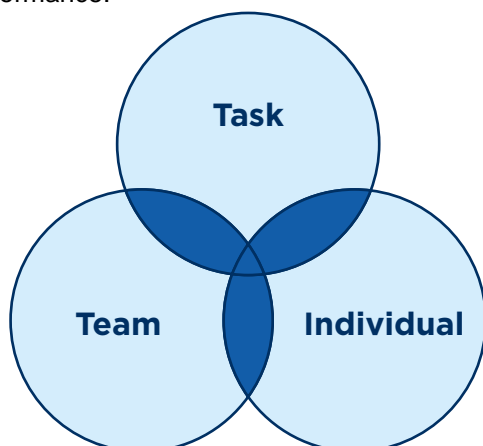
**Goal: Challenge appropriately to improve performance**

## Positive expectations approach

In the workshop on self, we looked at the need for managers to balance three areas:

- Achieving the task;
- Building and maintaining the team;
- Developing the individual.<sup>11</sup>

This will involve recognising and encouraging good performance, and also challenging poor performance.



You will get more out of your staff if you demonstrate a positive expectations approach. This is based on a core set of assumptions about how people work:

- Staff want to do a good job. No-one wants to be ineffective;
- People work best when they have clear targets in view;
- People can and will try to change if it makes sense to them;
- Performance can be improved if weaknesses are identified and worked on together;
- It is the behaviour and not the personality that needs to change;
- Paying attention to worker self-esteem and self-efficacy are crucial in helping them deal with criticism;
- Agreed action on improving performance enhances commitment and trust;

<sup>11</sup> Adair J (1973) [www.johnadair.co.uk](http://www.johnadair.co.uk)

The positive expectations approach enables you to support people to perform well. It avoids starting with blame for the individual. It allows exploration of the reasons why someone is not working effectively.

This approach is linked to authoritative management. This is management based on an adult-to-adult relationship where both parties recognise they have expertise to offer and value each other. Authoritative management encourages and supports the practitioner. It requires regular open discussion about how each party is performing, how they can develop and the support that they need. It doesn't deny that there is a power imbalance but works with this. This approach requires both parties to be open about their skills, knowledge, experience and values.

The authoritative approach is in contrast to other forms of management:

- **Neglectful** – leaves people to get on with things – results in avoidant or anxious behaviour;

- **Over control** – micro manages people – results in dependent or defensive behaviour;
- **Permissiveness** – praises people indiscriminately – results in unfocused or ineffectual behaviour.

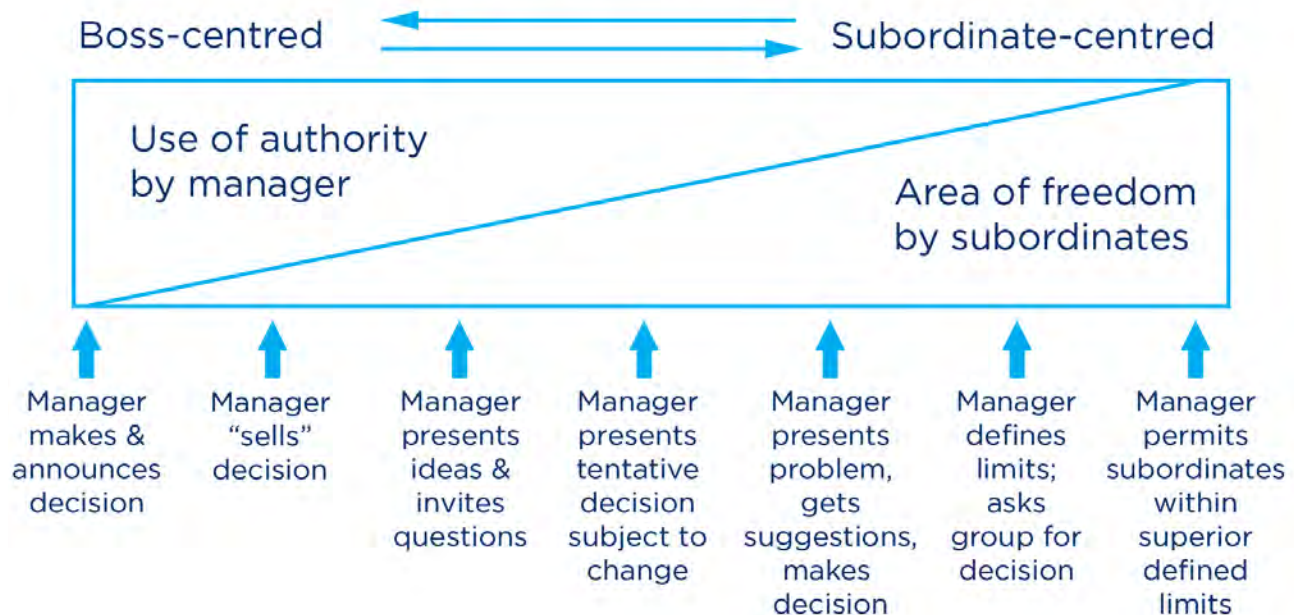
Positive expectations and authoritative practice supports managers to have adult conversations with individuals and the team about the amount of input they will have on how the team works.

As a manager, one of your responsibilities is to develop your team. You should delegate and ask a team to make its own decisions to varying degrees according to their abilities. There is a rising scale of levels of delegated freedom that you can use when working with your team.

The Tannenbaum and Schmidt Continuum<sup>12</sup> (below) is a simple model which shows the relationship between the level of freedom that a manager chooses to give to a team, and the level of authority used by the manager. As the team's freedom is increased, so the manager's authority decreases. This is a positive way for both teams and managers to develop.

<sup>12</sup> Tannenbaum, R., & Schmidt, W. H. (1973, May/June). 'How to choose a leadership pattern.' Harvard Business Review.

## Continuum of Leadership Behaviour



Over time, a manager should aim to take the team from one end to the other, up the scale, at which point you should also aim to have developed one or a number of potential successors from within your team to take over from you. This process can take a year or two, or even longer, so be patient, explain what you're doing, and be aware constantly of how your team is responding and developing.

When delegating and involving your team, it's extremely important to remember: irrespective of the amount of responsibility and freedom delegated by a manager to a team, the manager retains accountability for any catastrophic problems that result.

Delegating freedom and decision-making responsibility to a team absolutely does not absolve the manager of accountability. That's why delegating, whether to teams or individuals, requires a very grown-up manager.



### Reflective question

How clear am I about what I expect from staff and why?

## Managing performance

Managing performance is one of the most stressful areas of management. Successful performance management relies on a number of important elements:

- Integrity of the manager – practising what you preach;
- A respectful, adult relationship between the manager and the practitioner;
- Regular discussion of practice with a focus on the impact for children, adults and families;
- Recognition and praise for good performance;
- Recognition of the interplay of individual and contextual factors on performance;
- Skilful and timely challenge of performance that does not meet expectations.

Managers are given responsibility to manage performance and accountability for the performance of their team. Their authority to

challenge and support performance comes from three different areas:

- The role – what their job description says;
- Their professional authority – based on demonstrated capability and credibility;
- Their personal authority – based on their integrity and relationships with others.

Authority must be exercised in a legitimate, clear and consistent manner so that the authority is both trusted and experienced as enabling of the task the worker is trying to achieve.

There are some particular ethical considerations about challenging performance:

- Representation – has the worker been fully involved?
- Consistency – does the manager treat all staff like this?
- Impartiality – does the manager suppress his/her personal feelings or bias?
- Accuracy – does the manager appear competent in using his/her authority?
- Correctability – will the manager listen to reasoned arguments that s/he got some bits wrong?
- Ethicality – does the supervisor treat the worker with respect and dignity?<sup>13</sup>

Performance concerns may be low-level cumulative concerns or high-level one-off concerns. Key considerations are: whether there is a pattern; what the antecedents and consequences are; and how responsive is practice to feedback and support. Some examples of concerns are:

- Low standards of work. For example, frequent mistakes, not following through, inability to cope with or comply with instructions given;
- Inability to handle a reasonable volume of work to a required standard;
- Unacceptable attitudes to service users;

<sup>13</sup> Morrison, T. (2005) *Staff Supervision in Social Care: Making a real difference for staff and service users*. 3rd Edition. Hove: Pavilion Publishing.

- Unacceptable attitudes to colleagues or other agencies in terms of uncooperative behaviour, poor communication, inability to acknowledge the contribution of others, poor teamwork, or poor inter-personal skills;
- Poor punctuality and unexplained absences;
- Lack of skills in tasks/methods of work required;
- Lack of awareness of required standards; for instance, inappropriate dress code;
- Unwillingness to accept the requirement to be accountable; for instance, not attending for supervision;
- Consistently failing to meet agreed objectives;
- A health problem.<sup>14</sup>

The Employer Standards for social work state that practitioners should have the following support in place in order to be able to practice well:

#### Effective performance results from the fit between three things:

- The individual's values, experience, skills, personality, motivation and expectations;
  - The job role, demands, responsibilities, control and complexity;
  - The organisation's culture, systems, teams and services.
- **Clear Accountability Framework:** a sound understanding of what constitutes good social work practice, the theories, skills, research and evidence that underpin it and the ways in which their organisation can achieve and maintain it at strategic and operational levels;
  - **Effective Workforce Planning:** the right number of workers, with the right level of skills and experience, are available to meet current and future service demands;
  - **Safe Workloads and Case Allocation:** workers have safe and manageable workloads;

- **Managing Risks and Resources:** workers can do their jobs safely and have the practical tools and resources they need to practice effectively;
- **Effective and Appropriate Supervision:** workers have regular and appropriate supervision;
- **Continuing Professional Development:** opportunities for effective continuing professional development, as well as access to research and-relevant knowledge;
- **Professional Registration:** registered workers can maintain their professional registration;
- **Effective Partnerships:** Employers should establish effective partnerships with higher education institutions and other organisations to support the delivery of education and continuing professional development.<sup>15</sup>

It is essential that managers consider whether practitioners' performance issues arise from:

- **The individual;**
- **The role;**
- **The support;**
- **A mixture of these.**

Sometimes it is personal – there are a very small minority of staff for whom this is not an appropriate career choice. It is important to be able to recognise when this is the case, and support the worker to find a valued role in another organisation where they will be able to experience competency in their day to day role.

It is helpful to use the reflective cycle to consider how people are performing in terms of experience, reflection, analysis and planning. Generally, people gravitate towards what they like to do and what they are good at. This may lead them to neglect an area of the cycle e.g. continuously acting without reflection. They may also get stuck if they have a particularly strong response to one element of the cycle e.g. reliving emotion without being able to analyse what it means.

<sup>14</sup> Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) (2009) Early Professional Development - Handbook for employers and social workers. London: HMSO.

<sup>15</sup> LGA (2014) Standards for employers of social workers in England



Managers can support people to get on with their practice in the following ways:

- **Increasing awareness of feelings and experience** – this will support the worker to consider how they impact on others, how others impact on them, and how feelings can distort experiences;
- **Increasing the quality of analysis** – this will support the worker to consider the facts, the research and the specific knowledge about the service user in the overall context of their own emotional responses, rather than letting them dominate;
- **Increasing the quality of planning and action** – this supports the worker to be clear about outcomes that the organisation, the team and the user are wanting to achieve. It involves being clear about the standards linked to each task, and what a well completed task looks like.

One of the main skills that a manager needs is to identify what the problem is. This should be done with the practitioner using evidence that you have gathered. You will need to guard against:

- **Over hesitancy** – links to neglectful management;
- **Over accommodation** – links to permissive management;
- **Over reaction** – links to over controlling management.

You will need to get support yourself. This can be from your manager, from HR, from your professional lead or from your peers.



### Reflective question

How do I ensure that I am supported when I am managing performance?

## Giving critical feedback

When you are giving feedback on performance you need to follow a few steps before talking to the member of staff:

- Firstly, establish what is happening – how is the person behaving and what evidence do you have of this;
- Secondly, understand your role in the situation – how are you impacting on the behaviour of the member of staff;
- Thirdly, seek support to ensure that it is appropriate for you to raise the issue and that you have a sound plan for how to do this.

When you are confident that there is a performance issue and that you should be raising it, you need to arrange to speak to the member of staff. The interview that you have can be described as a bridging interview because it bridges the gap between your (evidence-informed) view of a worker's performance, and their own view of what is expected and what they are providing.

You should expect to learn about the interviewee and the team in this interview. If you do not learn anything about either then it is unlikely that much has been achieved.

The bridging interview requires follow up. It is not a one off event. If the circumstances are serious enough to warrant the interview then whatever you agree needs monitoring, reinforcing and reviewing.

Without preparation the interview is unlikely to succeed. You will become involved in fruitless discussion and lose focus. You need objective evidence of the problem and of the agency standard which is not being reached. Focus your evidence on the issue to be resolved. Stay specific. Ask yourself would you take the same action with another worker?



Before you talk to the worker ask yourself:

- Has the worker been made aware of the standards?
- If not, what are the standards you want to set, and how do these compare to custom and practice?
- Does the worker have the necessary capabilities to meet the standards?
- Does the worker have the confidence?
- Does the worker have the time and resources to meet the standards?
- Does the worker have the support to meet the standards?
- What exactly has the worker not been doing and for how long?
- What quality of supervision has been offered?
- Has poor performance been tackled before?
- If so, with what results?
- What are the payoffs for performing/ not performing?
- Is the problem worth solving?

**There are some specific barriers to engaging with workers:**

- **Secrecy** – Many staff do not want to speak about the impact on them of the work they do because they feel the agency or colleagues covertly or subtly deny them permission to do so;
- **Helplessness** – staff who feel helpless experience a sense of shame because they perceive the agency as despising helplessness in them as adult professionals who should 'cope'. Myths exist that they should behave rationally and logically. This is mediated further by gender stereotypes; men who cannot cope are wimps, women are hysterical;
- **Entrapment and accommodation** – staff are trapped in a paradox whereby telling the truth about their feelings is seen as unprofessional, whilst maintaining the 'pretence' is seen as 'coping'. The accommodation occurs when workers decide that the fault lies with themselves for feeling as they do, and that this would not happen if they were a better professional or person;

- Delayed or unconvincing disclosure – eventually, disclosure of the distress may be triggered by conflict, illness, deterioration of performance, training, or talking to a colleague. Where conflict triggers disclosure, this may be in the form of unpredictable behaviours such as mood swings, resignation or sickness. If this behaviour is not understood, the underlying distress will remain undetected e.g. “he never should have been a mental health worker anyway” or “it’s because she is a woman.”;
- Retraction – the delayed or confusing nature of the disclosure is greeted by agency disbelief, insensitivity and avoidance. This in turn leaves the worker psychologically and professionally abandoned, fearing that s/he will now be written off as incompetent. In the face of this threat to their whole career the only solution appears to be retraction on the part of the worker ‘I am fine now; it was nothing to do with work’. Secrecy resumes.
- The bridging interview should take the following form:
  1. **Explain your concerns** – what you would expect, what has been happening, the evidence you have for this;
  2. **Ask the interviewee for their view** – what they think has been happening;
  3. **Establish the gap** – you may have been mistaken or there may be a definite need for practice improvement;
  4. **Explore and understand the gap** – find out why the gap has occurred, what is due to the person, what to the role and what to the support;
  5. **Eliminate the gap** – agree what needs to happen in order to close the gap between what is expected and what is happening.

This may take some time and you may need to come back to the discussion. The person may react strongly. They may need additional support and so might you.<sup>16</sup>



**Reflective question**

How do I prepare to give constructive feedback?



**Exercise 3: Bridging interview**

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<sup>16</sup> Morrison, T. (2005) Staff Supervision in Social Care: Making a real difference for staff and service users. 3rd Edition. Hove: Pavilion Publishing.

# Development

If child and family social workers are to develop their capabilities throughout their careers, it is essential that they engage productively in continuing professional development – (Munro Final Report 2011 p116)

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**Goal: Promote individual and team learning to improve practice**

## Promoting professional capabilities

Development of capabilities should take place within a cycle of identifying learning needs, meeting these needs, transferring learning to practice and evidencing the changes in practice.

Managers can use appraisal, supervision and mid year review to underpin this cycle.

### a) Identifying learning needs

This should happen continuously throughout the year as part of reflection and reflective discussion in supervision.

Appraisal usually takes place once a year. The appraisal includes completing a learning and development plan. This should identify learning needs, the expected outcome of meeting these, how they can be met, and then agreed means for translating into practice.

The learning needs should relate to:

- The needs and aspirations of children, adults and families;
- The organisation's objectives to support people;

- The aims of the team
- Role, professional and career needs.

In order to identify learning needs, the following can be used:

- The professional capabilities for the worker's level and the level above;
- Job description.

### b) Meeting learning needs

Learning needs can be met in any way that is appropriate and effective, including:

- Work-based learning;
- Professional activity;
- Formal / educational courses;
- Self-directed learning;
- Shadowing colleagues in other roles;
- Volunteering for additional projects or developing specialisms that benefit the service.

As learning needs are met, they should be recorded in a portfolio to show:

- The activity carried out;
- When this will be reviewed in supervision;



## Stages of development (Hawkins & Shohet 1989)

1. Self-centred	2. User-centred	3. Process-centred	4. Process-in-context
Dependent on supervision.	Fluctuates between autonomy and dependence.	Increased professional confidence.	Professional maturity.
Anxious about being evaluated.	Over-confident vs overwhelmed.	Sees wider context in which user's needs exist – 'helicopter skills'.	Can articulate professional knowledge and insight to others.
Diffidence about making professional judgements.	Less simplistic, engages with complexity.	Can generalise and reflect on learning and skills.	Able to supervise or teach others.
Over-focus on content, ask and detail.	Tailors interventions to users. Owning the role.	Supervision more collaborative and challenging.	Increased self-awareness of strengths and gaps.
<b>Supervisory needs</b> Structure; Information; Teaching; Constructive and regular feedback; Encouragement.	<b>Supervisory needs</b> Freedom to test out; Space to learn from mistakes; Reflection on realities and constraints.	<b>Supervisory needs</b> Freedom to initiate; Further professional development; To be stretched and challenged; Danger: Boredom.	<b>Supervisory needs</b> To be given wider responsibility; To have their experience utilised; Less frequent supervision.

Development needs will relate to the:

- Individual;
- Their role;
- Their profession.

Managers do not necessarily need to be from the same professional background in order to effectively identify development needs. However, staff value managers and supervisors who:

- Give time to discussing discipline-specific skills and knowledge;
- Demonstrate an understanding of supervisees' roles;
- Try to understand the frameworks, roles, values and language of supervisees' professions;
- Consider whether profession-specific meetings or separate clinical supervision are needed.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> SCIE (2013) Effective Supervision in a Variety of Settings, Guide 50.



### Reflective question

What learning and development needs do my staff have as a result of being at different points in their career, in different roles and from different professions?

## Using evidence to improve practice

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit."* Aristotle

Practitioners are entitled to act by virtue of their expertise and the trust that people can therefore place in them. This expertise is underpinned by practitioners using sound information as the basis of their actions.

Evidence-informed practice is practice that is based on learning from the best available evidence about:

- What we should aim for;
- What is likely to get us there;
- How we can overcome barriers;
- How we will know if things are working.

**Evidence can come from three main areas:**

- Research evidence – what is likely to be effective;
- Practice experience – how does this work in practice;
- Service user and carer views – what's it like for the individual.

**This evidence needs to be weighed up to consider:**

- How reliable it is – where did it come from?
- How robust it is – can we see the workings out?
- How relevant it is – does it apply to the situation that I am looking at?

**Managers can encourage staff to:**

- Search for the best evidence;
- Weigh the evidence up;
- Take action that is guided by the evidence.<sup>20</sup>

**There are a whole range of sources of evidence:**

- Research – websites, journals, digests such as community care, research reports;
- Practice experience – case discussions, reflective accounts, peer forums, joint sessions with other agencies;
- Service user and carer views – case discussions, feedback, consultations, user-led training.

All of these are learning opportunities. Managers play an important role in creating the conditions for people to access, use and share evidence. They can model the use of evidence and challenge practitioners to justify their decisions by reference to a range of evidence.

The analysis and critical reflection domain for the advanced social work capability level states that:

*Social workers are knowledgeable about and apply the principles of critical thinking and reasoned discernment. They identify, distinguish, evaluate and integrate multiple sources of knowledge and evidence. These include practice evidence, their own practice experience, service user and carer experience together with research-based, organisational, policy and legal knowledge. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity.<sup>21</sup>*

**Reflective question**

What evidence do I use to make decisions; what do I expect my team to use?

**Sharing learning**

One of the ways of developing good practice is to build a community of practice. Communities of practice are groups of people who have a shared aim that involves something that they do. The community may be a group with the same role or location, however it can be much wider than this.

Members of the community produce knowledge about how to meet their goal as they practice. They come together to share this knowledge so that all of them can advance their practice.

Communities of practice are supported by:

- A shared goal;
- An awareness of the how being part of the community can help them to achieve their goal;
- The development of a shared repertoire of resources, experiences, stories, tools and ways of working that make up a shared practice;
- Opportunities to discuss, reflect, share and learn.

<sup>20</sup> RiPFA (2013) Good decision making: Practitioners' handbook


<sup>21</sup> www.tcsw.org.uk



Managers can provide conditions for a community of practice to thrive by:

- Creating time and space for staff to come together, for example in peer forums or in group supervision;
- Brokering relationships with other teams and agencies to encourage them to share their knowledge for example through joint training or meetings;
- Facilitating activities that help people to discuss, reflect and share;
- Supporting individuals to develop their capabilities and confidence to share learning;
- Encouraging peripheral members of the community to get involved and share their learning;
- Making sure that the community doesn't exclude people;
- Creating a repository for the shared learning.

Sharing learning helps people to reduce the time they spend looking for information, reduce isolation, strengthen capabilities and build support networks.<sup>22</sup>

 **Reflective question**  
How do I encourage practitioners to share their learning?

 [Exercise 4: Appraising research](#)

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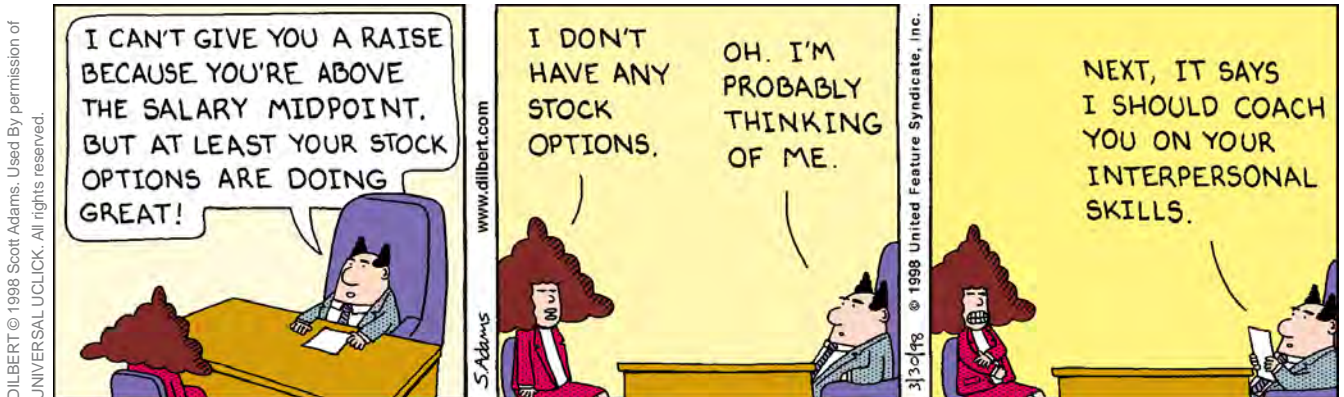
<sup>22</sup> Wenger, E (2006) Communities of practice: a brief introduction. Online [http://www.ewenger.com/theory/communities\\_of\\_practice\\_intro.htm](http://www.ewenger.com/theory/communities_of_practice_intro.htm)



# Support

“People who don't take risks generally make about two big mistakes a year. People who do take risks generally make about two big mistakes a year.”

– Peter F. Drucker



**Goal: Provide appropriate support to manage uncertainty, risk and emotional impact**

## Developing emotional intelligence

*“Emotion is recognised to play a part in critical thinking as it does in all cognitive processing. The thinker should monitor the various influences of emotion, articulating this where possible and appropriate.”<sup>23</sup>*

Developing the ability to reflect on action and in action is important for people at all levels and is particularly important for practitioners. They have to be able to engage with service users, assess and observe and make meaning, make decisions on the basis of these activities, think about the safety and well-being of people and the best way to intervene to meet their needs both now and in the future.

This requires the practitioner to be able to tolerate uncertainty and to stay both curious and challenging of themselves and others.

These tasks, which form the core of the social work task, cannot be performed without emotional intelligence. And if they are performed by workers who are shut down, closed off and not able to tolerate emotions, then the core tasks are compromised. Howe states that having a competence stance without taking into account the relational task of social work can lead to practitioner technicians who are ‘confined to performing surface responses according to pre coded procedures (Howe, 1996, pg. 92).

This will lead to stress in both the worker and the service user, who will easily pick up on the dissonance between practitioner's stated purpose, (here to help you) and their actions (disengaged, dismissive, presumptive, one size fits all). The practitioner will cultivate belief systems that are negative (they can't be helped, we make no difference, there are not enough resources, this organisation only cares about paper and target) which in turn will damage their resilience and lead to poor mental health for the practitioner and poor outcomes for service users. More resilient practitioners have improved relationships with service users, thus enhancing their professional practice and improving outcomes.

<sup>23</sup> Moon, ( ) pg 12 A perspective on the elusive act of critical thinking

**Emotional intelligence includes:**

- Being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations;
- To control impulses and delay gratification;
- To regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think;
- To empathise and to hope; Goleman (1996).

Emotional intelligence provides the foundation upon which to build emotional resilience *“the ability to succeed personally and professionally in the midst of high pressured, fast moving and continuously changing environments”*

(GlaxoSmithKline)

Help seeking behaviour in practitioners is particularly important in understanding their ability to make meaning of the work they do and the status of the people who are using their services (a panicky, defensive or dismissive attitude towards receiving help and support within the own family, from friends, and peers can denote a lack of ability to connect or contain people seeking their help).

In particular it is interesting to look at Morrison's contention that some organisations fail to distinguish between 'being emotional' from 'using emotion' and that this can short circuit the ability of the staff to be effective in their use of relationship, and in their capacity to accurately identify their own and others' emotions accurately. This failure can lead to 'secondary trauma' to be acted out in the workplace in a destructive manner causing dissonance in the workplace. How do your staff experience 'emotions' in the workplace?

As a manager how do you use supervision to recognise secondary trauma and the cost to the 'altruistic' worker of working with service users that may well be contributing to their own 'self destruction' and not responsive to the 'helper'. These emotions can become destructive and pervasive and feed into a belief system that can lead to stress and a blunting of emotional intelligence.

As a supervisor how can you respond to the burnt out emotionally blunted professional who is disengaged from their service users?

Decision making is also compromised when emotion is not attended to. Research from Fredrickson (2001) highlights that feelings influence what we pay attention to, and how we think, remember and make decisions. This means that the purely analytical model of decision making does not have validity if it does not consider the emotional information that is also in the mix.

**Strategies to support staff who are stuck**

Using Kolb's cycle to focus on increasing awareness of feelings and experience – this will support the worker to consider how they impact on others, how others impact on them, and how feelings can distort experiences.

Parts of the skills required by supervisors to improve performance successfully are those of problem definition and analysis. As a supervisor, you need to explore the issues carefully, checking that the perceptions are shared between the worker and the supervisor, that you are examining the issue from all sides and that your expectations are reasonable and clear.

Starting conversation by asking people how they think a task is going, why they think you might have asked them to come and speak with you, or what concerns they might have with work at the moment allow you to explore the issue fully prior to leaping into solutions.

Using Kolb's cycle supports you to consider the whole worker and their experiences.

**1. Specific responses for the worker stuck in reflection:**

- Clarify the worker's understanding of the task;
- Make your expectations about what has to be done clear;
- Check what skills, knowledge and experience the worker needs to do the task. Identify training needs;

- Ask the worker how the task is similar to something else they have previously managed;
- Explore what happened when the worker performed a similar task, identifying the positive and negative outcomes. Check whether these are related to issues of race, gender, etc;
- Break down the task down into manageable parts that are within the worker's own perception of competence and prioritise what needs to be done;
- Check out what the worker's worst fear or fantasy is about what could happen;
- Give feedback pointing out the worker's strength and experience;
- Identify processes which may be unhelpful or disempowering to the worker in the way s/he is either thinking or behaving;
- Suggest colleagues who can share some of the task or co-work;
- Offer the chance to observe an experienced worker doing the task;
- Set time limits on getting things done, specifying how the work is to be recorded;
- Ensure your availability to see the worker soon after they have done the task;
- Ask the worker to specify the help s/he wants from you or anyone else;
- Arrange a rehearsal of the task;
- Ask the worker how s/he will feel once the task is completed;
- After completing the task, help the worker analyse what they did well, and areas for further work;
- Do not focus too much on feeling. This is where they are stuck.

## 2. Strategies for the worker stuck in analysis:

- Check out what feelings the worker has around the task;
- Note and give feedback if questions about feelings are answered with thoughts, theoretical responses or generalisations. This may have a gender-mediated element;
- Pursue 'feelings' answers to 'feeling' questions;
- Ask the worker to undertake a process record of a task in order to raise their awareness of the experience they are engaged in;
- Check out what fears or fantasies the worker has about doing the task and whether these are related to factors of race, gender etc;
- Maintain focus on the issue and avoid being drawn into generalisations or intellectualisation;
- Acknowledge the validity of different theoretical/political perspectives but point out agency, ethical or legal obligations to the task or user;
- Schedule other times to discuss more general issues which are of concern to the worker;
- Clarify the exact nature of the task, break it down and prioritise what needs to be done when. Set a review date;
- Identify what help the worker would like to complete the task;
- Set up rehearsal opportunities;
- Identify training needs;
- Check whether being stuck like this is familiar to the worker. It may be rooted in an earlier bad experience, or a more fundamental realisation that the nature of the job is in conflict with moral or political convictions. If so, offer time to review the worker's career options and aspirations;
- Avoid entanglement in or competition over intellectual debates.

### 3. Strategies where the worker is stuck in action:

- Ensure full attendance at supervision sessions;
- Check out about how the worker is feeling about his/her work and the pressures of the job;
- Be prepared for considerable defensiveness. The worker may fear any examination of his/her work is an attempt to invalidate all the hours they have put in. The busyness may be masking personal needs and may require sensitive handling;
- Recognise the worker's commitment and abilities;
- Identify examples of good work and use them to help worker compare these with less competent work in order to highlight the areas for change;
- Find a positive rationale for the changes, which you are seeking; for example, you are concerned about working too hard, or that the worker's skill can be used more productively;
- Ask the worker to summarise plans, goals and rationale for involvement in a particular case. Avoid long anecdotes about what the worker has done. Request written summaries with case plans for cases;
- Check the condition and whereabouts of the case file;
- Identify training or re-training needs;
- Analyse the worker's time-management. This should include a look at his/her diary. It is agency time not personal time the worker is managing;
- Clarify expectation about accountability and reporting arrangement to you;
- Consider whether there are any needs for counselling and, if so, how the agency should support such a need;
- Assess whether they can, with help, continue to do the current job. If not, explore within the agency other options;

- Ensure that, whilst being sensitive, you maintain a clear boundary as supervisor and do not become drawn into being a friend, counsellor or rescuer.

### 4. Strategies when the worker is stuck in experiencing.

Where some form of burn out is suspected:

- Seek information about the symptoms of burn out;
- Check sickness and lateness record;
- Ascertain how the worker is feeling about work. Levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, sense of progress, future hopes and aspirations. Be prepared for denial and anger;
- Review the worker's case load and commitments. Are they excessive?
- Identify training or re-training needs;
- Clarify that the worker is clear as to roles and responsibilities;
- Sensitive check out if there is anything else going on in the worker's life which may account for his/her presentation;
- Audit files and performance carefully. Someone who is burnt out will be very de-sensitised to areas of risks, needs and distress with users. Check that the worker's accounts are accurate;
- Give specific feedback about attitudes and behaviour you have observed that have made you suspect burn out;
- Discuss the issues with your supervisor/ personnel department and consider the need to seek a medical opinion. There can be important but hidden physiological signs associated with burn-out which will require medical help. A medical examination is a staff care intervention and can help the worker to see what is happening. A significant rest from work may be required;
- In the light of all of the above, review with the worker the ability to continue in the current post either temporarily or in the long term.

Prepare possible options in consultation with your manager/personnel department;

- Be careful not to be so concerned about the staff care aspect in dealing with burn-out that accountability issues are neglected.

**5. Strategies when the worker is blocked at experiencing.**

Where the worker appears to be frozen or immobilised:

- Clarify the worker's perception of role and responsibilities;
- Clarify the worker's expectations as to skill knowledge and experience. These may be inflated and unrealistic;
- Check out the worker's training and developmental needs;
- Identify what the worker feels confident about;
- Check out whether there has been a specific incident or event that has caused distress or loss of confidence;
- Discuss how you will provide constructive feedback and ask how the worker can best use supervision to build confidence;
- Negotiate gradual build-up of responsibility with regular review points. There can be tension about the worker's wish to return to work and your judgement about whether the worker is ready;
- Check out previous agency and supervisory history. Is there anything unresolved that is 'blocking the worker'? Pay particular attention to experiences of discrimination or previous incidents of distress which were insensitively handled;
- Explore the worker's understanding of the work, the agency and the decision to join your team. Is the worker sure this is the right job or post?

- It will be important not to exclude the possibility of this being the initial stages of burn out and therefore some of the strategies mentioned in the first section may be relevant. However, the worker here is likely to be more fearful or diffident than cynical or negative. There may not be any obvious precipitating incident;
- Do not assume that because you give positive feedback the worker is able to internalise it.

**Generating responses**

You need to be seen as part of the solution not the problem. Motivating your staff to address these issues requires the same set of skills practitioners use when working with service users.

**Effective problem solving occurs when we:**

- Share perceptions and build agreement about the nature of the problem;
- Explore the fears and fantasies attached, either to the nature of the problem or its possible solutions;
- Identify the beliefs, values and assumptions which each bring to the problem;
- Generate achievable options for change.

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**What is on your side?**

Organisation	Self
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance management framework</li> <li>• Written supervisory contracts</li> <li>• Observation auditing of performance by supervisor</li> <li>• Supervisor's knowledge of the worker</li> <li>• Supervisor time and energy</li> <li>• Managerial support</li> <li>• Emotional support for supervisors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident in role</li> <li>• Comfortable with organisation goals</li> <li>• Perceived as competent</li> <li>• Comfortable with power and authority</li> <li>• Good reflective practice base</li> <li>• Other areas of life not impacting on work role</li> <li>• Up to date knowledge and skills</li> </ul>

**The concept of an emotional bank account**

An emotional bank account is an account that you have with everyone you know, in particular friends, family and loved ones. You make deposits by doing something nice and meaningful to or for that person and you make withdrawals when you hurt them or treat them badly.

The balance in your account is the amount of trust that's been built up in a relationship, the more trust, the higher the balance. Just like a monetary account, you want this account to have a large balance so that the relationship you have with that person is a high trust relationship

**Deposits**

- Clear expectations;
- Kindness, courtesy;
- Making/keeping promises;
- Loyalty to the absent (don't talk negatively about them);
- Apologies;
- Seeking first to understand;

- Accepting responsibility;
- Exercising patience with others;
- Distinguishing between person and behaviour;
- Assuming the best of others;
- Rewarding open, honest questions and feelings;
- Admitting mistakes, apologizing, asking for forgiveness;
- Renewing your commitments to others;
- Being open to the influence of others;
- Accepting the person and the situation;
- Agreeing on the limits, expectations, consequences;
- Being there for others;
- Letting natural consequences teach;
- Help others find solutions to problems.

**Withdrawals**

- Unclear expectations;
- Unkindness, discourtesy;
- Breaking promises;
- Disloyalty, duplicity;
- Pride;
- Seeking first to be understood;
- Blaming others;
- Manipulating;
- Thinking win-lose;
- Being defensive;
- Not rewarding others;
- Not admitting mistakes;
- Being dishonest;
- Showing favouritism;
- Not giving credit;
- Sending mixed messages;
- Showing a lack of courage;
- Taking advantage of others;
- Blame others for mistakes.



### Six major deposits

1. Understanding the individual;
2. Attending to the little things;
3. Keeping commitments;
4. Clarifying expectations;
5. Showing personal integrity;
6. Apologizing sincerely when you make a withdrawal.

### Managing conflict within the team

In social care it can sometimes seem as if we are mimicking the distressed and dysfunctional family dynamics that we come across in our day to day work. Like our families in distress, it seems easier to focus on what is not working, who is not working and what we are unable to do. It takes a lot of effort and hard work once you are in a cycle of conflict to change.

When managing others you have to be clear about the roles, contributions, expectations and skills of each member. This understanding has to occur on both a individual and a group level with each member being clear about their responsibilities and contributions.

Checklists such Tool 4: Building "A" Team and Tool 5: Management steps to building team resilience can support managers and team members to think about their own behaviour within the group context.

Use Tool 6: Belbin's Team roles questionnaire with your team to understand how different ways of functioning and learning can lead to increased team functioning.



[Exercise 5: Responding to emotional disruption](#)



[Tool 3: Supervisor checklist helping practitioners manage work-related stress](#)



[Tool 4: Building "A" team](#)



[Tool 5: Management steps to building team resilience](#)



[Tool 6: Assessing team roles](#)

# Mediation

“A group of people get together and exist as an institution we call a company so they are able to accomplish something collectively that they could not accomplish separately – they make a contribution to society, a phrase which sounds trite but is fundamental.” – David Packard, late co-founder of Hewlett-Packard



**Goal: Balance individual, team and organisational demands.**

## Using upward and downward power

A manager needs to be able to model the use of power and authority well. Authority is the sanctioned use of power. Power is the ability to implement the rights of authority. The manager has to use both power and authority well in situations where others have more power over them and in situations where they have more power over others.

### Three sources of authority:

1. Role Authority – over people's finance and resources given by senior management and transparent in any supervision policy.
2. Professional Authority – based on demonstrated competence, knowledge, skills and credibility.

3. Personal Authority – based on how the individual manages his/her attitude to authority and responding to the authority of others.

### Different power bases:

- Reward power = the ability of the supervisor to take and give away;
- Coercive power = the ability to punish and reprimand;
- Legitimate power = the right of one's position and office;
- Expert power = the use of superior knowledge and skills;
- Reverent power = where others seek the leaders approval;
- Information power = to give, withhold, or filter information;
- Connection power = perceived to be close contact with influential people;



- Ascribed power = accurate or distorted attributions of power ascribed to the manager.

### **Authoritative management:**

this is essential at all levels of management. It:

- Promotes the worker's use of self and supports the social worker as an agent of change;
- Develops the worker's confidence and knowledge to: work accurately across agency boundaries; forge positive inter-disciplinary relationships; have the ability to challenge other professionals where necessary;
- Enables the worker to reflect on their practice, and use appreciative inquiry approaches to understand and address the dynamics occurring between workers, and service users and how these might be played out within organisational and inter-disciplinary networks;
- Promotes critical thinking;
- Is delivered by managers with a strong professional knowledge and practice base;
- Is based on the manager's awareness of their own impact on the supervisory process, and willingness to reflect on this;
- Facilitates a culture of opportunity in which the worker can develop specialist knowledge, and/or be involved in innovative work/roles;
- Is regular, structured and collaborative;
- Is based on accurate assessment of the worker's competence;
- Promotes the exchange model of social work practice within which the worker is comfortable using their professional expertise whilst at the same time working collaboratively with children and their families.

### **Supports staff to work more deeply on individual cases**

- Applying critical reasoning and a theoretical evidence base to their work;
- Challenging assumptions and considering

both the manifestation of the parenting problem and the underlying issues;

- Considering the emergent issues, including those that may not be presenting as a problem but could escalate without support and intervention.

### **Supports staff to work more effectively across the network**

- Communicating effectively with other practitioners and professionals;
- Understanding the roles of other agencies;
- Forming and sustaining relationships across other agencies;
- Being proactive and assertive with action and professional opinion, being prepared to put forward professional judgements.

### **Supports staff to balance organisational and personal needs**

The tension arises for the worker in trying to achieve work-life balance. The role of the manager is to support the staff member to achieve a results-oriented allocation of time, energy, and resources between the three important forces controlling any worker's life: him/herself; her/his family and friends; and her/his organisation.

### **Supervisory authority**

Power must be exercised in a legitimate, clear and consistent manner so that the authority is both trusted and experienced as enabling of the task the worker is trying to achieve.

It involves emotional containment, setting of boundaries, establishing limits and confronting blockage and boundary breaches.

- **Representation** – has the practitioner had an opportunity to play part in the decision taken?
- **Consistency** – does the manager treat all cases like this? Behave the same despite the power deferential?
- **Impartiality** – does the manager suppress his/her personal feelings or bias?
- **Accuracy** – does the manager appear competent in using his/her authority?
- **Correctability** – will the manager listen to reasoned arguments that s/he got some bits wrong?
- **Ethicality** – does the manager treat the practitioner with respect and dignity?



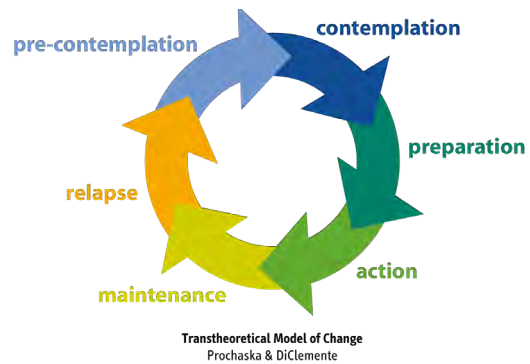
**Reflective question**

- Do you have the right balance between your professional and personal needs?
- Is your personal vision compliant with the organisational vision?

**Managing change**

Change is a constant factor in social care organisations. It has an impact on teams and individuals that can be positive but is frequently negative. There are various models that indicate how change affects people. Two useful models for social care are:

- The transtheoretical model of change – this shows that people go through a series of stages before change is permanent; they may relapse and need to go through the cycle a number of times.



The transtheoretical model of change (taken from RIPFA's Change cards website)

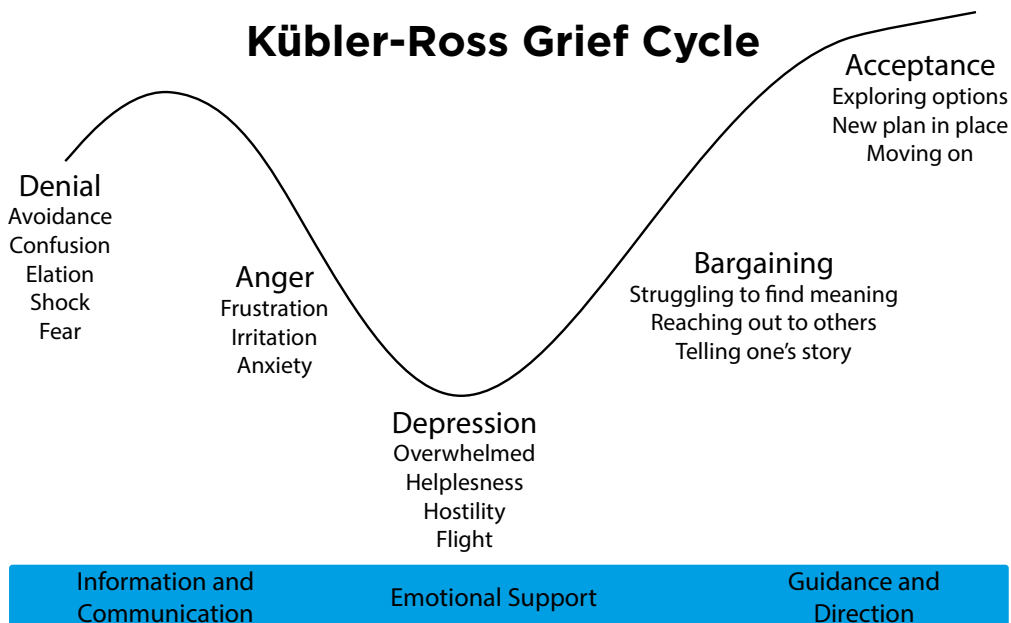
**Ascribed power**

However clear the agency might be, practitioners may still ascribe and project negative or idealised perceptions of authority onto the manager.

Fantasised bad manager - Resulting in mistrust, inability to engage and adversarial dynamics.

Fantasised idealised manager - Seeing the manager as the perfect parent, capable of resolving anything, resulting in dependency, and unwillingness to share responsibility.

**Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle**





- The stages of grief – this shows the responses that people may have to loss which is a part of change; these can be very different for different people.

These models acknowledge that change involves an emotional response. Some of the emotions that people experience may include:

- Excitement and enthusiasm;
- Hopefulness;
- Confusion and uncertainty;
- Anxiety and loss;
- Frustration and feeling overwhelmed.<sup>24</sup>

There are various factors that affect how people respond to change. Managers have a role in ensuring that these are in place, reminding staff about them, and supporting them to make use of them:

- A vision of what things will look like when the change has happened;
- Clear values that underpin this vision and relate to children, adults and families;
- Aims that show what needs to happen;

- Information about the time frame, resources, and where things have got to;
- The opportunity to input to all of these;
- Space to consider how it is going;
- Support for staff to learn and try out new ways of working;
- Time to build relationships;
- Success stories and feedback on things that are working.

Some people are better able to cope with change at any time than others. Managers need to be alert to how people are doing and respond differently to different people.



[Exercise 6: Managing change](#)



[Tool 7: Strategically thinking about open plan workspaces](#)

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<sup>24</sup> RiPFA (2011) Change Cards

# Practice improvement planning

“People who perceive that training is useful, learn and transfer more”

– (Research in Practice, Training Transfer)

**Goal: Identify goal to transfer learning into practice**

## Reminder of training transfer principles

As with the Strengthening Self workshop, the aim is for there to be a direct line from your learning to changes in your practice to improved experiences and outcomes for children, adults and families.

This is more likely to happen if you:

- Reflect on how the learning from this workshop relates to your learning needs;
- Identify the main learning that you want to use in your practice;
- Identify what your practice will look like when you are using this learning (your goal);
- Identify the actions you will take in order to change your practice;
- Identify when and how you will know that these actions have happened.

The actions that you identify should be SMARTER:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Realistic;
- Time-bound;
- Ethical;
- Reviewed.

It is helpful to identify the likely barriers and the enablers for you doing your action now. This will support you to avoid the main pitfalls and to get the help of others in carrying out your action.


Try and enlist the support of your manager and your peers through sharing your goal and the actions you will be taking.

Your goal should be something that will help you in your role and that you are motivated to do. Look for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation:

- Intrinsic – makes you feel good;
- Extrinsic – others recognise your efforts.

Try not to add to your workload. Think about:

- Things you can stop doing;
- Things you can start doing;
- Things you can do differently.



**Reflective question**  
How do you want your day-to-day work to be different?

 [Exercise 7: Practice improvement plan](#)

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# Tools

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Tool 7: Strategically thinking about open plan work spaces .....	78



## Tool 2: Borton's (1970) framework further developed by Rolfe (2001)

This reflective model is very simple and often used as the first step on the ladder of the reflective practitioner. This model encompasses three simple questions to be asked of the experience or activity to be reflected on, What? So what? Now what? Jasper (2003) endorses the use of this model by novice practitioners and students as this model allows novices to reflect in the "real world of practice" (Jasper 2003, p99), therefore allowing them to be analytical of their developing practice.



### What?

This is the description.

What was the problem? What was my role? What happened?

#### What did I do?

- Is the problem/difficulty/ reason for being stuck/reason for feeling bad/reason we don't get on?
- Was my role in the situation?
- Was I trying to achieve?
- Actions did I take?
- Was the response of others?
- Were the consequences for the student? Myself? Others? Feelings did it evoke in the student? Myself? Others?
- Was good/bad about the experience?

### So what?

This is the analysis.

What was so important about this experience?  
What did I learn?

#### So what?

- Does this tell me/teach me/imply/mean about me/my class/others/our relationship/my patient's care/the model of care I am using/ my attitudes/my patient's attitudes?

- Was going through my mind as I acted?
- Did I base my actions on?
- Other knowledge can I bring to the situation? Could/should I have done to make it better? Is my new understanding of the situation?
- Broader issues arise from the situation?

### Now what?

This is the merging of the knowledge with forward planning.

Now what do I need to do?

Now what might be the consequences of my actions?

Now what do I do to resolve the situation/make it better/improve service user care?

#### Now what?

- Do I need to do in order to make things better/ stop being stuck/improve my teaching/resolve the situation/feel better/get on better/etc., etc.?
- Broader issues need to be considered if this action is to be successful? Might be the consequences of this action?

Adapted from: Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., Jasper, M. (2001) Critical reflection in nursing and the helping professions: a user's guide. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan and Borton's original model from 1970.

## Tool 3: Supervisor checklist helping practitioners manage work-related stress

When working with vulnerable people, there are specific, recurrent sources of stress that practitioners experience. Supervisors are critical in helping practitioners identify the sources of work-related stress, and in managing stress and other negative feelings associated with the work. Following are some sources of stress associated with working with adults or children who are at risk of harm:

### Sources of stress in practice

The supervisor can use this list in discussion with staff, either individually or in team meetings, about sources of stress they have experienced in social care casework. The first section lists the tasks that may be stressing the practitioner and the second section leaves room for the supervisor and supervisee to note how important the task is to their day to day role, how often the difficulty is occurring and what impact it is having on the practitioner's emotional resilience.

Task	Priority/Frequency/Impact
Insufficient time to do the assigned work.	
Agency priorities that conflict with personal values and motivation.	
Lack of opportunity to reflect or plan proactively.	
Knowledge about the abuse and neglect of children and adults.	
Vulnerable children or adults on open cases who are harmed again by their caregivers.	
Frustration about parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to protect their children or family members who are at risk of harm.	
Empathy about parents/carers who seem to try to provide safety, permanence and wellbeing for their children or family members, but are not successful.	



Task	Priority/Frequency/Impact
Worry that social care services are not adequate to protect a child or preserve a relationship.	
Constant demands from families, carers, managers, and other agencies.	
Policies and procedures that seem not to make sense or that interfere with achieving goals and objectives.	
Organisational barriers that prevent effective practice.	
Lack of cooperation from other partners and agencies.	
Negative media attention on difficult cases.	
Inadequate funding, inability to access or provide essential services.	
Public attitude toward the agency and its work.	
Caseloads are too high, do not allow personal attention needed by individuals, families and communities.	
Unclear priorities, and continually shifting priorities, preventing anything from ever being completed.	
Each practitioner's personal sensitivities and reactions to stressful situations.	
Competing demands from family, spouses, one's own children, and other personal factors that may increase work related stress.	

## Supportive supervisory activities

Supportive activities of the supervisor are directed toward creating a psychological and physical climate that enables staff to feel positive about their job. These proactive strategies can help to insulate practitioners from stress, and create an environment where the practitioner feels assured that s/he can receive help coping with work-related stress. Note in the second section whether it is possible to create these environments. If it is already in place, how useful is it. If it is not possible what is getting in the way?

Strategy	Frequency/Usefulness (HML)/Blockers
Periodically in team meetings, lead a discussion with staff about sources of stress they have experienced in practice. Issues of stress felt by practitioners should be addressed during each case conference and /or team meeting.	
Provide opportunities for the team to access, use and share evidence of good practice to inform their work.	
Provide an empathic, respectful, caring and supportive environment in which practitioners can comfortably discuss their practice issues.	
Support staff to understand the impact of their work on their values and the ethical dilemmas that they face.	
Encouraging staff to express and constructively resolve their feelings and concerns about abused and neglected children or adults and parents'/carers' actions, agency practices, and community opinions.	
Develop and support a safe learning environment in the team: use mistakes as an opportunity to teach and learn; encourage all members of the team to offer solutions and to learn from each other; acknowledge individual members' contributions to the team learning.	
Support staff's attempts to develop competence, effectiveness, self-directedness, creativity, and independence in their work to achieve outcomes for the people they work for.	
Use the Training Needs Analysis to guide practitioners in selecting training needed to develop competence and confidence in their work.	

Strategy	Frequency/Usefulness (HML)/Blockers
When giving staff feedback about their work performance and relating to supervisees, do this in a direct but understanding and non-authoritarian manner.	
Help staff think through, prioritize, and develop plans to manage competing demands.	
Be sensitive and responsive to the practitioner's personal needs and in helping staff understand how these impact their work.	
Be sensitive to work stresses and concerned for staff well-being.	
Be available to provide consistent emotional support and understanding.	
Help staff recognize and honour the incremental progress of individuals, families and community as they move towards providing a safe environment for children and adults.	
Personally recognize individuals' effective and successful work with service users that achieve desired outcomes and that can confirm a practitioner's confidence and sense of self-worth and competence.	
Provide recognition and positive reinforcement for the work of staff.	
Emphasise appreciation of cultural diversity and its benefit for the team.	
Develop and support genuine teamwork.	

Strategy	Frequency/Usefulness (HML)/Blockers
Build the capacity of staff in making decisions by using consultative and group decision making strategies, or delegating responsibility for certain decisions to the team.	
Involve staff in planning and decision making.	
Encourage peer support and collaboration, especially when a practitioner has a difficult case.	

### Individual supervisory support

Following are supervisory strategies that may be useful when a practitioner is experiencing heightened stress that is affecting their work with people at risk of harm or, if not addressed, will soon affect their work. The supervisor can be proactive in the following strategies. Not all strategies will be possible due to organisational requirements or due to management style. Consider the list, think about what areas you use naturally and often, and which you would struggle with or would need to work differently to be able to use effectively.

Support	Strength/Difficulty
Offer one-on-one emotional support and understanding to decrease feelings of isolation.	
Assist the practitioner in organizing the workload, re-prioritizing tasks, and delaying deadlines.	
Help staff identify, develop, and link with appropriate in-agency and community resources and supports who can contribute to meeting service user needs and reduce the practitioner's personal workload.	
If decreased confidence in certain areas of the work is contributing to the practitioner's stress, offer training that would address relevant practice issues.	
Engage the team in strategies to relieve a team member's stress level.	
Temporarily reassign job tasks or provide staff support to counter overload from highly stressful or overly active caseload.	

Support	Strength/Difficulty
Arrange for flexible work scheduling or job-sharing of high-stress tasks.	
Reduce the stress through job-enrichment activities (giving more meaning to the work), job diversification (increasing the variety of job-related tasks), or job rotation (to alternate services in the agency).	
Make referrals to counselling and other supportive services to address personal emotional needs or family situations.	
Evaluate flex and vacation time balances, Encourage the practitioner to use accrued vacation or flex time as a tension-relieving measure – a day off in the middle of the week, an afternoon off, the opportunity to work at home. (Leave time would depend on office policy).	
Make a temporary assignment from the field to the office with temporarily diminished contact with service users to help the practitioner take time to rest and regroup.	

## Personal support

Practitioners have other potential sources of support. Encourage a stressed practitioner to consider these personal resources.

Other support	Possible Limitations
The practitioner's values and motivation to work with and support people who are at risk of harm.	
Effective and successful work with service users that achieves desired outcomes could confirm a practitioner's confidence and sense of self-worth and competence.	

<p>The practitioner's peer group (both within and outside of the team) can provide understanding and feedback, and can be knowledgeable about the unique sources of stress when working with people at risk of harm.</p>	
<p>The practitioner's social and spiritual support network of family and friends.</p>	
<p>The practitioner's own capacity to adjust, and make adaptations ultimately affects their response to stress.</p>	

Written by the Institute for Human Services for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program and The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services OCWTP/ IHS, June 2010 and adapted by CCP Sept 2013. Some content adapted from Dorman and Shapiro, Preventing Burnout in Your Staff and Yourself (CWLA 20040)

## Tool 4: Building “A” team

### Building your “A” team support network

An effective way of managing personal change is to build a support network of family, friends and colleagues that we can rely on for different forms of support or feedback. The support could include someone to:

- Discuss our feelings with;
- Bounce ideas around with;
- Discuss issues and ways we could resolve them;
- Help you take your mind off the issues and focus on other things;
- Provide feedback.

To build an effective ‘A’ team, think about people in your personal and organisational networks. Use the form to write down the names of colleagues, friends or associates who could help you with different kinds of support.

What	Who
Someone I can always rely on.	
Someone I just enjoy chatting to.	
Someone who makes me feel valued.	
Someone who can give me honest feedback.	
Someone who is always a valuable source of information.	
Someone who will challenge me to sit up and take a good look at myself.	
Someone I can depend on in a crisis.	
Someone I feel close to.	
Someone I can share bad news with.	
Someone I can share good news and good feelings with.	
Someone who introduces me to new ideas, new interests and new people.	

Source: The emotional intelligence pocketbook by Margaret Chapman IDEA.

## Tool 5: Management steps to building team resilience

Emotional resilience is sometimes described as 'hardiness' or 'inner strength'. We all know people and colleagues who appear to recover quickly from setbacks and are able to stay committed and increase their efforts when the going gets tough.

It used to be thought that people were born with resilient attributes, but we now know that resilience includes some key behaviours that we can all develop.

The management steps to building team resistance cover a number of line management behaviours that can help build team resilience by:

- Reviewing and improving the way you manage your teams;
- Enhancing your own and your team members' emotional wellbeing;
- Building a culture of engagement.

The checklist shows the management behaviours and some suggested actions that you can take to help you maintain wellbeing.

### Read each of the behaviours and potential actions and consider:

How you can demonstrate that behaviour to your team.

What additional support you need to demonstrate that behaviour.

Development modules are free to access from:

<http://www.managingemployeewellbeing.com/bitc/>

The on line modules show approaches that work just as well with an office based, shift based or remote team and include: exercises, quizzes, scenarios and information, as well as a resources page to help you look at the subject in more detail.

The materials have been produced by Affinity Health at Work (concepts, content and materials) and Blended Solutions (web design) for Business in the Community. The project has been funded by ARAMARK and Places for People.

Behaviour	Potential action	Support or information required
Behave with integrity.	Be respectful and honest with team members.	
Manage your own emotions.	Behave consistently and calmly around your team.	
Take a considerate approach.	Be thoughtful when managing others and delegating.	



Behaviour	Potential action	Support or information required
Manage workloads and think ahead.	Monitor and review existing work, allowing prioritisation and planning.	
Solve problems.	Deal with problems promptly, rationally and responsibly.	
Empower team members to contribute.	Listen to, meet and consult with the team. Provide direction, autonomy and development opportunities for individuals.	
Be accessible.	Be accessible.	
Be sociable.	Be sociable.	
Show empathy and understanding.	Try to understand each individual in the team in terms of their health, satisfaction, motivation, point of view and life outside work.	
Manage conflict.	Deal with conflicts decisively, promptly and objectively.	
Get support when you need it.	Seek advice when necessary from, HR and Occupational Health.	
Take responsibility for resolving issues.	Have a supportive and responsible approach to issues and incidents in the team.	

## Tool 6: Assessing team roles

### Introduction

1. In developing and leading a team, it is important to have an understanding of the contribution which each member, including the leader, makes to the functioning of the team.
2. There are different models and theories which can be used to reach this understanding, but the framework used in the following exercises uses the ideas developed by Meredith Belbin. In addition to having a very credible research base, this approach has been tried and tested in a wide variety of organisations, including social services, and has been found to be positive and practical.
3. Belbin's theory is that for a team to be really effective, all roles should be covered but each team member can and will carry more than one role.
4. The advantages of undertaking the exercises are:
  - To get an analysis of team functioning with a view to improving team and individual performance;
  - To make explicit the significance of the contribution made to the work of the team by each member, particularly the strengths which that member brings;
  - To create a climate in which associated weaknesses can be accepted and even sometimes compensated for;
  - To identify when team roles are not covered so that gaps can be filled, either by recruitment, or by conscious change of role of another team member.
5. A team will benefit from undertaking the exercises periodically as team roles will change over time, particularly with the addition of new members.

### Instructions

Complete the personal inventory (page 68) by following the instructions:

- For each section of the inventory, select one, two or three sentences most applicable to yourself;
- Then in the column on the left apportion 10 points between those sentences you have selected to indicate the relative extent to which each applies;
- For example, in one section you might feel that there are only two sentences that apply to you: one of which, you feel, sums you up well while the other only applies some of the time. In this instance you could give your first choice 7 points and the remaining points to your second choice. In some instances you might decide that there are two sentences which apply to you equally - if this is the case, award 5 points to each.

#### **You must allocate all 10 points in each section:**

- Be spontaneous. Do not agonise over your responses - if you take more than 15 mins to complete the exercise you are spending too much time over your responses;
- Score the inventory using the key provided.

#### **Resist the temptation to read the team roles descriptions before completing the inventory!!**

- Take photocopies of the inventory and invite a number of others to complete it on your behalf returning it to you for scoring. Make sure they use the column on the right 'Others' to enter their scores;
- Transfer all the scores to the summary sheet and then read through the descriptions of the team roles, paying particular attention to those which you and others have scored as the predominant ones;
- Where there are inconsistencies between your perceptions and those of others, make sure you talk them through;
- For your predominant team roles refer to the team role counselling notes. These will help you think about your development plan.

## Timings

- Self:** Completion of inventory (page 68)  
15 minutes (any longer you are taking too much time)
- Scoring  
10 minutes
- Comparing results and reading profiles  
45 minutes
- Others:** Completion of inventory  
15 minutes
- Discussion:** Up to 45 minutes with each individual who has completed their perception of you.  
Up to half day with a small working group/team.

## Scorecard

Name: ..... Date: .....

Team Roles	My Scores	Other Scores	Other Scores	Other Scores	Other Scores	Other Scores
SH						
CO						
PL						
RI						
ME						
IMP						
TW						

### Important points to remember

- No one team role is better or more important than any other; each team role is a balance of strengths and weaknesses;
- Two or three of the team roles will probably appear more predominant than others. When you look at the descriptions which follow think about if these seem to make sense to you. If not think about why?
- You should not expect to find a perfect match between your perception of your main team roles and those of the other people completing the assessment on your behalf. Have they responded as they would expect you to behave? Have you responded as you think you should behave or would like to behave?
- Once you have identified your predominant styles read the counselling notes (page 66) and transfer a copy to your learning profile.

## Description of team roles

### Shapers (SH)

#### Role

Shapers take an active lead in 'shaping' the way in which team effort is applied. They are strong in setting short term objectives and are clear on priorities and will impose some 'shape' or pattern on group decision making.

They are excellent at sparking life into a team and are very useful in groups where 'red tape' is apt to slow things down. Shapers are inclined to rise above problems of this kind and forge ahead regardless. They are well suited to making necessary changes and do not mind taking unpopular decisions. They are probably the most effective members of a team in guaranteeing 'action'.

#### Characteristics

Shapers are highly motivated people with a lot of nervous energy and great need for achievement. Usually they are aggressive extroverts and possess strong drive. Shapers like to challenge others and their concern is to win. They like to lead and to push others into action. If obstacles arise, they will find a way round. Headstrong and assertive, they tend to show strong emotional response to any form of disappointment or frustration. They sulk but have the capacity to bounce back.

Shapers are single-minded and argumentative and may lack interpersonal understanding.

#### Strengths

Drive, energy, determination to succeed in spite of the odds.

#### Weaknesses

Intolerant, prone to emotional outbursts, poor listeners, lack sensitivity to others.

### Co-ordinators (CO)

#### Role

Co-ordinators control the way in which a team moves forward towards its objectives by making best use of the people resources. They quickly recognise individuals' strengths and weaknesses and ensure that their contributions are used effectively.

They are distinguished by their strong sense of purpose and the ability to intervene if they feel the team is losing direction.

#### Characteristics

Mature, trusting and confident, they delegate readily. In interpersonal relations they are quick to spot individual talents and to use them in the pursuit of group objectives. While co-ordinators are not necessarily the cleverest members of a team, they have a broad and worldly outlook and generally command respect.

#### Strengths

Inspire enthusiasm, strong communicators, calming influence.

#### Weaknesses

Not particularly creative or innovative. May at times appear too 'laid back'.

### Plants (PL)

#### Role

The main use of a plant is to generate new proposals and to solve complex problems. They often take a strategic view of issues and situations and will seek to break away from the 'tried and tested' ways of doing things.

#### Characteristics

Plants are innovators and inventors and can be highly creative. They can provide the spark and ideas for major new developments. Usually they prefer to operate by themselves at some distance from the other members of the team, using their imagination and often working in an unorthodox

way. They tend to be introverted and react strongly to criticism and praise. Their ideas may often be radical and may lack practical constraint.

### Strengths

Original ideas, problem solvers, creators of new options.

### Weaknesses

Find difficulty in communicating their ideas to those who are not 'in tune'. Careless over detail.

## Resource investigators (RI)

### Role

Resource investigators are good at exploring and reporting back on ideas, developments or resources outside the group. They always know someone, somewhere who has what you require.

They are the best people to set up external contacts and to carry out any subsequent negotiations. They have an ability to think on their feet and to probe others for information - 'wheeling and dealing' is their speciality.

### Characteristics

Resource investigators are often enthusiastic, quick-off-the-mark extroverts. They are good at communicating with people both inside and outside the organisation. They are natural negotiators and are adept at exploring new opportunities and developing contracts. Although not a great source of original ideas, the resource investigator is effective when it comes to picking up other people's ideas and developing them. As the name suggests, they are skilled at finding out what is available and what can be done. They usually receive a warm reception from others because of their own outgoing nature.

Resource investigators have relaxed personalities with a strong inquisitive sense and a readiness to see the possibilities in anything new. However, unless they remain stimulated by other, their enthusiasm rapidly fades.

### Strengths

Outgoing, communicative, enthusiastic, good negotiators.

### Weaknesses

Easily bored, lack follow through, easily distracted from the team's objectives

## Monitor evaluators (ME)

### Role

Monitor evaluators are best suited to analysing problems and evaluating ideas and suggestions. They are very good at weighing up the pro's and con's of options. To many outsiders the monitor evaluator may appear as dry, boring or even over-critical. In some jobs success or failure hinges on a relatively small number of crunch decisions and this is ideal territory for a monitor evaluator.

### Characteristics

Monitor evaluators are serious-minded, prudent, unemotional, individuals with a built-in immunity from being over-enthusiastic. They are slow in making decisions preferring to think things over. Usually they have a high critical thinking ability. They have a capacity for shrewd judgements that take all factors into account.

### Strengths

Sound judgement, discretion, hard-headedness, clear thinking.

### Weaknesses

Hypercritical, may lack inspiration and ability to motivate others. Appear to lack warmth and feeling.

## Implementers (IMP)

### Role

Implementers are useful to an organisation because of their reliability and capacity for application. They succeed because they are efficient and because they have a sense of what is feasible and relevant. Good implementers often progress managerially by virtue of good organisational skills and competency in tackling necessary tasks.

### Characteristics

Implementers have practical common sense and a good deal of self-control and discipline. They favour hard work and tackle problems in a systematic fashion. On a wider front the implementer is typically a person whose loyalty and interest lie with the organisation and who is less concerned with the pursuit of self-interest. However, implementers may lack spontaneity and show signs of rigidity.

### Strengths

Organised, hardworking, apply common sense to turn concepts into practical working procedures.

### Weaknesses

Resist change, lack flexibility and are unresponsive to unproven ideas

## Team workers (TW)

### Role

The role of the team worker is to prevent interpersonal problems arising within a team and thus allow all team members to contribute effectively. Not liking friction, they will go to great lengths to avoid it.

The diplomatic and perceptive skills of a team worker become real assets, especially under a managerial regime where conflicts are liable to arise or to be artificially suppressed. Team worker managers are seen as a threat to no one and therefore the most accepted and favoured people to work with. Team workers have a lubricating

effect on teams. Morale is better and people seem to co-operate better when they are around.

### Characteristics

Team workers are the most supportive members of a team. They are mild, sociable and concerned about others. They have a great capacity for flexibility and adapting to different situations and people. Team workers are perceptive and diplomatic. They are good listeners and are generally popular members of a group. They operate with a sensitivity at work, but they may be indecisive in crunch situations.

### Strengths

Sociable, responsive to others, caring, avert conflict. Good listeners.

### Weaknesses

Over accommodating, uncomfortable with interpersonal conflict, friction and competition. Prone to 'fence sit' when being pushed for action.

## Completer finishers (CF)

### Role

Completer finishers are invaluable where tasks demand close concentration and a high degree of accuracy. They foster a sense of urgency within a team and are good at meeting schedules. In management they excel by the high standards to which they aspire, and by their concern for precision, attention to detail and follow through.

### Characteristics

Completer finishers are unlikely to start anything that they cannot finish. They are motivated by internal anxiety to get things done, yet outwardly they may appear unruffled. Typically, they are introverted and required little in the way of external stimulus or incentive. Completer finishers can be intolerant of those with a casual disposition. They are not often keen on delegating, preferring to tackle all tasks themselves for fear that their standards will not be met.

## Strengths

Conscientious, orderly, accurate. A capacity to follow through.

## Weaknesses

Anxious that 'things will go wrong'; fail to see the broader picture; reluctant to let go; prefer perfectionism to excellence.

## Team role counselling notes

### The shapers

#### Objective:

To give shape and form to the team's activities

#### Methods to be cultivated:

- Directing the team's attention to the need to set objectives and establish priorities, and helping establish these clearly;
- Taking a wide perspective of the team's purpose and helping members perceive their own role and contribution within the overall scheme;
- Exerting a directive influence on group discussions, and summing up the outcomes in terms of the objectives and targets set;
- Giving the team's activities generally an appropriate shape or pattern by co-ordinating the various contributions;
- Keeping a constant objective and detached view of the team's progress and achievements and intervening when they seem to veer from a relevant and appropriate path;
- Intervening when the group is in danger of moving too far from its brief or another member is 'getting away' with an inappropriate idea or suggestion.

#### Behaviour to be avoided:

- Steam-rolling team members when in a position of authority;
- Assuming more authority than status in a group would warrant;

- Competing with other team members particularly the plant and the monitor evaluator.

#### Additional points:

The shaper can develop a sense of direction in a group that is leaderless, but they should do so in a subtle way rather intensively. If they find themselves in a more formal leadership position, they will need to consider the co-ordinator role and adopt a more positive controlling/co-ordinating position. Such a role with its greater emphasis on routine activities and duties will entail some additional self-discipline.

Where the shaper has only junior status in a group, they will need to time their contributions and interventions diplomatically, possibly putting them in the form of leading questions.

### Co-ordinator

#### Objective:

To control and organise the activities of the team, making best use of the resources available.

#### Methods to be cultivated:

- Preparing the ground so that each meeting is structured and organised to enable all its business to be transacted efficiently within the time allotted;
- Encouraging each individual to play their part in pursuit of the team's objectives by identifying both the objectives of the exercise and the way in which each team member can best help;
- Being on the look-out for weaknesses in the team's make-up and working to correct them either by making changes in team

membership or by calling for, and expanding, certain team roles amongst existing team members;

- Co-ordinating the use of the resources available both within and outside the team; and keeping people's efforts orientated in the direction of obtaining the team's goals;

Exercises	Tools	Contents
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- Exercising personal self-disciplines and perseverance in acting as a focal point for group effort, especially when things get difficult;
- Proper and appropriate delegation. Choosing the moment at which to move from consultation and discussion to decision-making.

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**Behaviour to be avoided:**

- Taking advantage of a formal role to hog the stage;
- Rigidity and obstinacy posing as grit and determination;
- Failure to recognise individual abilities and merits in the team so that poor use is made of team resources;
- Constantly endeavouring to raise the standard of all the team's activities by vigilance and help as required,
- Maintaining a sense of urgency within the team.

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**Behaviour to be avoided:**

- Unnecessary emphasis on detail at the expense of the overall plan and direction;
- Negative thinking or destructive criticism. Lowering team morale by excessive worrying.

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## Personal inventory

### Section A

WHEN INVOLVED IN A PROJECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I can be relied upon to see that work that needs to be done is organised.</li> <li>2. I pick up slips and omissions that others fail to notice.</li> <li>3. I react strongly when meetings look like losing track of the main objective.</li> <li>4. I produce original suggestions.</li> <li>5. I analyse other people's ideas, objectively for both merits and failings.</li> <li>6. I am keen to find out the latest ideas and developments.</li> <li>7. I have an aptitude for organising people.</li> <li>8. I am always ready to support good suggestions that help to resolve a problem.</li> </ol>	

### Section B

IN SEEKING SATISFACTION THROUGH MY WORK:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I like to have a strong influence on decisions</li> <li>2. I feel in my element where work requires a high degree of attention and concentration.</li> <li>3. I am concerned to help colleagues with their problems.</li> <li>4. I like to make critical discrimination between alternatives.</li> <li>5. I tend to have a creative approach to problem solving.</li> <li>6. I enjoy reconciling different points of view.</li> <li>7. I am more interested in practicalities than in new ideas.</li> <li>8. I particularly enjoy exploring different views and techniques.</li> </ol>	

**Section C**

WHEN THE TEAM IS TRYING TO SOLVE A PARTICULARLY COMPLEX PROBLEM:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I keep a watching eye on areas where difficulty may arise.</li> <li>2. I explore ideas that may have a wider application than in the immediate task.</li> <li>3. I like to weight up and evaluate a range of suggestions thoroughly before choosing.</li> <li>4. I can coordinate and use productively other people's abilities and talents.</li> <li>5. I maintain a steady systematic approach, whatever the pressures.</li> <li>6. I often produce a new approach to a long continuing problem.</li> <li>7. I am ready to make my personal views known in a forceful way if necessary.</li> <li>8. I am ready to help whenever I can.</li> </ol>	

**Section D**

IN CARRYING OUT MY DAY-TO-DAY WORK:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am keen to see there is nothing vague about my task and objectives.</li> <li>2. I am not reluctant to emphasise my own point of view in meetings.</li> <li>3. I can work with all sorts of people provided that they have got something worthwhile to contribute.</li> <li>4. I make a point of following up interesting ideas and/or people.</li> <li>5. I can usually find the argument to refute unsound propositions.</li> <li>6. I tend to see patterns where others would see items as connected.</li> <li>7. Being busy gives me real satisfaction.</li> <li>8. I have a quiet interest in getting to know people better.</li> </ol>	

**Section E**

IF I AM SUDDENLY GIVEN A DIFFICULT TASK WITH LIMITED TIME AND UNFAMILIAR PEOPLE:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I often find my imagination frustrated by working in a group.</li> <li>2. I find my personal skill particularly appropriate in achieving agreement.</li> <li>3. My feelings seldom interfere with my judgement.</li> <li>4. I strive to build up an effective structure.</li> <li>5. I can work with people who vary widely in their personal qualities and outlook.</li> <li>6. I feel it is sometimes worth incurring some temporary unpopularity if one is to succeed in getting ones views across in a group.</li> <li>7. I usually know someone whose specialist knowledge is particularly apt.</li> <li>8. I seem to develop a natural sense of urgency.</li> </ol>	

**Section F**

WHEN SUDDENLY ASKED TO CONSIDER A NEW PROJECT:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I start to look around for possible ideas and openings.</li> <li>2. I am concerned to finish and perfect current work before I start something else.</li> <li>3. I approach the problem in a carefully analytical way.</li> <li>4. I am able to assert myself to get other people involved if necessary.</li> <li>5. I am able to take an independent and innovative look at most situations.</li> <li>6. I am happy to take the lead when action is required.</li> <li>7. I can respond positively to my colleagues and their initiatives.</li> <li>8. I find it hard to contribute in a job where the goals are not clearly defined.</li> </ol>	

**Section G**

IN CONTRIBUTING TO GROUP PROJECTS IN GENERAL:

Points (Self)	Inventory	Points (Others)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I think I have a talent for sorting out the concrete steps that need to be taken given a broad brief.</li> <li>2. My considered judgement may take time but is usually near the mark.</li> <li>3. A broad range of personal contacts is important to my style of working.</li> <li>4. I have an eye for getting the detail right.</li> <li>5. I try to make my mark in group meetings.</li> <li>6. I can see how Ideas and techniques can be used in new relationships.</li> <li>7. I see both sides of a problem and take a decision acceptable to all.</li> <li>8. I get on well with others and work hard for the team.</li> </ol>	

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## Scoring key for personal inventory

### Example scoring sheet

Below is an example of a completed scoring sheet. See next page for a blank score sheet.

	SH	CO	PL	RI	ME	IMP	TW	CF
A	3 6	7 ....	4 ....	6 4	5 ....	1 ....	8 ....	2 ....
B	1 3	6 ....	5 ....	8 4	4 ....	7 ....	3 3	2 ....
C	7 ....	4 2	6 ....	2 5	3 ....	5 ....	8 3	1 ....
D	2 3	3 ....	6 1	4 ....	5 ....	1 ....	8 ....	7 6
E	6 ....	5 2	1 ....	7 6	3 2	4 ....	2 ....	8 ....
F	6 4	4 ....	5 ....	1 4	3 ....	8 ....	7 2	2 ....
G	5 2	7 ....	6 ....	3 4	2 ....	1 4	8 ....	4 ....
TOTALS:	18	4	1	27	2	4	8	6

Predominant Team Roles: Resource Investigator (RI); Shaper (SH)

## Personal inventory scoring sheet

1. Transfer your points allocation from the seven sections of the personal inventory to the appropriate boxes below. (For an example of a completed scoring sheet see previous page).
2. REMEMBER to take enough copies of the scoring sheets to mark other people's assessment

	SH	CO	PL	RI	ME	IMP	TW	CF
A	3 ...	7 ...	4 ...	6 ...	5 ...	1 ...	8 ...	2 ...
B	1 ...	6 ...	5 ...	8 ...	4 ...	7 ...	3 ...	2 ...
C	7 ...	4 ...	6 ...	2 ...	3 ...	5 ...	8 ...	1 ...
D	2 ...	3 ...	6 ...	4 ...	5 ...	1 ...	8 ...	7 ...
E	6 ...	5 ...	1 ...	7 ...	3 ...	4 ...	2 ...	8 ...
F	6 ...	4 ...	5 ...	1 ...	3 ...	8 ...	7 ...	2 ...
G	5 ...	7 ...	6 ...	3 ...	2 ...	1 ...	8 ...	4 ...

## Tool 7: Strategically thinking about open plan work spaces

Below is an example a of tool which can be used by individuals to identify areas that impact on their ability to control information and stimulation in the workplace. This tool can be used in supervision to discuss how best to support the individual to be most effective and contained in the environment.

CONTROL AREA	Outgoing Information	Incoming Stimulation
Social	<p>How much do I want my colleagues to know about my personal interests?</p> <p>Should I connect with colleagues on social media?</p>	<p>How can I limit interruptions by co-workers?</p> <p>How can I avoid constant exposure to the noise and activity of others?</p>
Technological	<p>Can I opt out of giving biometric data used for security purposes?</p> <p>Can I shield my name from feedback to superiors?</p>	<p>Do I want pop up previews of incoming emails?</p> <p>I need to focus: is it ok to turn off instant messaging or the phone?</p>
Spatial	<p>Can people see my computer screen while I am working?</p> <p>What personal photos or artefacts do I want to display?</p>	<p>What space configuration minimises my exposure to flickering fluorescent lights?</p> <p>How can I block out my neighbours telephone conversations?</p>

## Reading list

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### Other useful tools:

<http://www.managingemployeewellbeing.com/bitc/>